

# GGG

GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



THE MECHA GENRE ROLEPLAYING GAME



# GGG

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**Please enjoy!**



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# CHAPTER 1



# INTRODUCTION



**Giant Guardian Generation** is an RPG or Roleplaying Game of the anime Mecha Genre, in the following pages you will find the rules to the game, tips to get the most out of it, examples of the game in action and, hopefully, an entertaining read.

Maybe you already know what you're in for being already an avid roleplayer or mecha fanatic, maybe you have something of an idea of what those two are like, maybe all this is new to you and you're free of preconceptions or aren't even sure if you're going to like where this is going to take you. I'd like to think that you will.

## Roleplaying Game?

You might have the impression that "Roleplaying" requires you to dress up in outlandish costumes and speak in silly accents, but it is thankfully much less alien than that. To put it in as few words as possible; Roleplaying Games are improvised theater with an element of chance and concrete rules. You can have roleplaying and games separate, but roleplaying games by definition combine both these traits.

Now let's be a bit more specific, because I make it sound simple but you must be still wondering what the heck is up with all those funny looking dice and the pages of numbers and charts.

Roleplaying games are much like videogames in that you have a character, called a **Player Character or PC**, and you will be controlling them as part of a greater story, but there are no limits to how much you can do with your character other than your imagination. Where as in most stories the heroes are forced into doing things that you as spectator (or player, in a videogame) don't want them to do, in a roleplaying game you are in control of everything your character does.

You don't need much to play a roleplaying game, just a pen, paper and some dice. You are not going to need to dress up the part of the characters you will impersonate, and you don't even need a board and pieces.

The action takes place in your imagination and you are in charge of narrating it, adding and taking away details much like in any conversation. As long as you have something to write with, paper to write on, at least one die, and a means of communication you can play a roleplaying game.

One of the players will take a special role, that of the GM or Genre Master, and will coordinate the game in a more general sense. Think of the GM's role like a triple combination between the banker in Monopoly, the referee of a sports match, and the director of an improvised theater session. The GM is in charge of everything that the other players aren't directing themselves, the GM is in control of the PC's allies and their enemies; they set the stage for everyone else to respond to and play, and are the authority that regulates if the game's rules are being applied fairly.

However, the outcome of the scenes the group will be taking part in is not scripted or purely based on the authority of the GM, instead, everyone uses the rules of the game to steer how it will progress.

Roleplaying Games generally employ dice for this and GGG uses ten-sided dice. Before playing, make sure you own one, two or three **ten sided dice**.

You can get them at any Friendly Local Gaming Store. Just google for one in your area.

Speaking of dice, from now on in the book you'll see that a ten-sided die will be referred to as a 'd10,' such as when instructing you to "roll a d10." Multiple die are referred to by '2d10' (that means two ten sided dice) or '3d10' (three of them) and so on. Sometimes the game will instruct you to roll a 'd5'; that is not a five sided die that you need to go out and buy too, but, instead, a d10 whose result is halved and rounded up.

Some optional charts make use of a d100 - and just like with the d5 - you are not supposed to find one of those for your collection, instead you roll 2d10 having assigned one of them as units and another as tens, with a result of 10 representing a 0, but double 10's representing a 100.

## Mecha Genre?

That's the real treat of the meal that is **Giant Guardian Generation** - from now on shortened to GGG for everyone's sanity. You must have seen at least one show with Mecha elements for this book to truly speak to you. What the heck is Mecha, you ask? Wikipedia defines Mecha as the Japanese term for fictional robots and vehicles, typically combat oriented, and that's the short story.

The long story is that Mecha are extremely varied, but are generally humanoid, giant and piloted by one or more people. Their purpose ranges from being weapons of war between humans to saviors of humanity against giant monsters from space to embodiments of sleeping ancient gods or even simple disaster relief tools.

But why the use of the Japanese Mecha instead of the more common localized term Mech? Because despite their superficial similarities, Mecha are different from Mechs: Mechs are generally grittier and 'tacticool' in the colloquial tongue, while Mecha generally emphasize drama over realism. Thus, duels between Mecha slowly build up to a climax of dramatic speeches and super attacks instead of being short and brutal, and bitter rivals can duke it out in the middle of a battlefield remaining unmolested by the conflict at large.

That is not to say Mecha can't be realistic. They just generally don't bother too much with realism. There are Mecha shows out there that are surprisingly low on suspension of disbelief or are down to earth with their characterization and plot, instead of bordering on melodramatic. Of course, for every utilitarian bodysuit of armor, there is a galaxy sized robot... But that's the best thing: the Mecha themselves and the Mecha Genre can be whatever you want, you just need to know what that is.

Plus, giant robots are cool.

## The GAIN System

The game of GGG uses the GAIN System which stands for Genre Adaptation and Immersion Nurturing. GAIN emphasizes dramatism over realism, and smooth flow of gameplay over attention to detail. There are many such Systems and other Roleplaying Games out there that serve as wonderful platforms for many kinds of games, from fun hack and slash adventures in the depths of impenetrable dungeons to a deep and meaningful deconstructions of the human condition. GGG happens to be one that specializes in imitating your favorite Mecha anime and manga.

This is because GGG has ingrained Mecha conventions into itself, making sure that nearly anything you've read in a comic or seen on TV is represented in a way that is faithful to the tone of the source material and is simple to understand. This is done while giving as much attention to the robots as to the pilots themselves, ensuring both feel like individual characters of their own, yet greater than the sum of their parts.

Whether you are gunning down bugs in the middle of an alien hive, talking your enemies into surrendering, or just trying to file paperwork properly in the face of mind-breaking tedium, everything is solved one way: the d10. You roll one (or more, but generally one) d10, add any Modifiers you have to the roll - a rules manifestation of your PC's skillset - and then check your result against the Difficulty Number (DN) of the action you are trying to perform. If your result is equal to or greater than the DN then your action is a Success.

The act of rolling to determine the outcome of a situation is called a Test. If you roll more than one die for a Test, then you will be asked to either add the results together or keep the better result, depending on the situation. Some of these Tests will be 'linked' or chained into one another, such as Tests made first to hit a fast-moving enemy and then to check if you've broken past their Mecha's armor, for example. But you always want to roll high; the higher, the better.

Many a time you will have an Advantage or a Disadvantage to your Tests, these represent factors that make it easier or harder to succeed without bending the odds too much. Advantages let you roll an additional d10 at the time of making a Test, and you then choose the best (higher) result out of the dice rolled, discarding the rest. Disadvantages work similarly, but in reverse, you roll additional die and keep the worst (lower) result out of the many presented.

You will get a better glimpse of the game's rules as you start reading the following chapters, but don't worry if some game terms aren't explained right away, by the time you are done with the book everything should be clear.

If you really want to check out a particular rule, check the glossary at the end of this chapter or the quick reference cheat pages at the very end of the book.

## Features Checklist

So that you don't go in with the wrong mindset, following is a quick list of what GGG presents to the reader. Take note you can make use of as many of these features as you like and adapt others to better suit your tastes, the best Mecha game is one that you and your playing group enjoy, not the one that I or anyone else says is But do take into consideration that this rulebook works better when you give its style a chance and change the least possible.

### What you will find in GGG:

- A streamlined Mecha system that is easily adapted to any kind of game.
- Mechanics that emphasize the narrative and incentivize both good sportsmanship and character immersion.
- Balanced Gameplay that can be as simple or as complex as the group wants it to be.
- Rules that allow any kind of PC to be just as good a pilot as everyone else, no matter how feeble or wimpy.
- A setting with three possible game modes, evocative of classic and modern Mecha with their own distinctive style.

### What you will NOT find in GGG:

- Mecha customization extensive on the numbers akin to an engineering simulator.
- Gameplay that prioritizes narrative control over all other mechanics.
- Necessary referencing of tables and charts during gameplay.
- A system for standalone one-shot action adventures.
- A miniatures-based combat system.

## Gameplay Segments

Like the shows it emulates, a typical GGG game includes a string of events where characters develop in personality leading to giant robots beating the stuffs out of each other. A Season is the collective name for all meetings when your group plays GGG, while each individual time you and your friends meet up is called an Episode.

A chain of Episodes within a Season that share one or more themes is called an Arc. Arcs are pivotal to GGG as each of them provides a milestone, after which everyone gains a substantial augmentation to their abilities.

Each Episode is divided into Scenes, which work very much like the ones you probably already know of by name. During Scenes, characters engage in one or more activities and proceed to the next Scene when they're done, and so on. Scenes come in two kinds: Operations and Intermissions. The former are the previously mentioned battles involving Mecha and the latter are activities your characters take part of where the focus is on their lives outside of the battlefield.



During Intermissions all the PCs explore their Dramatic Themes and develop them to become stronger as people and characters, using a stage preset by the GM as a springboard to let their own imaginations provide the direction for the rest of the action that will take place.

During Operations everyone boards their personal Mecha and proceeds to make things explode instead, making use of their stored Genre Points to unleash the full might of a main character's power against their enemies.

Typically an Intermission Scene doesn't last more than ten to twenty minutes, so you can have multiple of them per Episode, and top it off with an Operation to end the meetup with a bang. You can have another Intermission Scene after the Operation to close it off, or you can start in media res and have the Operation first, as long as everyone has had their own fifteen minutes of fame at least once during the Episode.

### The Two Golden Rules

#### Rulings Trump Rules:

Even though GGG is designed to be relatively airtight system in the kind of games it is designed to run, it obviously can't cover for absolutely every possible situation that comes up at the game table, and it is likely that you will at some point find yourself in a scenario where the rules either don't go or where they defy common sense. In these cases, the GM is encouraged to either make a ruling on the spot so as to uphold the spirit of the rules or ignore the rules entirely and declare what happens instead.

To be succinct: If a player finds a rules loophole that allows him to get away with something that no one else finds fun and is undeniably silly, the GM has ultimate authority to say "No." Don't be a jerk. That goes for the GM as well.

#### Specific Trumps General:

Whenever the text of a character's ability contradicts a general rule of the game, the ability wins. Most PCs will have multiple abilities in their sheets that break the rules in some way. Some are very minor examples, but others are the thing that can turn a weak character into a powerhouse.

It is a good general rule to follow that, if a specific rule contradicts a general rule – for instance, an ability that lets them use short ranged Weapons at long ranges – the specific rule wins.



## The Characters

The Players will control the PCs, the ones with the large sheets, that in addition to everything everyone else can do will go out and do battle. Unlike most Mecha shows (or manga, or movies, or what have you) there is no clear singular main character.

Instead, the PCs are an ensemble cast that drive the game forward and are in the spotlight roughly the same amount of time each. That is not to say they all contribute to the story in the exact same fashion or that they all have the same role in the game, just that each one's story is just as important as everyone else's.

The rest of the cast are known as Non Player Characters (NPCs) and are, usually, under the GM's control. The role of NPCs is varied, ranging from playing a support role as family, friends, colleagues, proteges, or bosses to being the foils of the PCs as the game's antagonists, taking the part of grunts, nemeses, and ultimate big bads.

## System Requirements

Here is the list of things that you will need to play GGG at the table, in addition to at least one copy of this book...

- Two or more friends to play with.
- At least one d10 for each person. One per player and another for the GM.
- Copies of the PC and Mecha Sheets, one for each player.
- Pencils, an eraser, and paper to take down notes.

...While this is the optional but recommended list of things you want to have.

- A quiet place where you won't be disturbed.
- Three to five hours to play at your own pace.
- Snacks and drinks, such as chips and sodas.
- Index cards to pass notes with.

## An Example of Play

To get you in the mood for the rest of the book, here is a typical game session of GGG. Even if this book appears intimidating with all these endless pages of rules, through the rest of the book there will be examples of play made using the world setting presented in this book. In this one, the example is a simple initiation to roleplaying for one of the players and everyone warming up. There is no battle against filthy xenos or infiltration of enemy bases in this example. The PCs are simply test pilots just now being introduced to each other.

The players, their PCs and Mecha are:

- Ingham, the GM;
- Ryu, as Jeff Gons the test pilot of General Z;
- Raymond, playing Blade Farran, at the helm of the Black General;
- Maya, owner of Maria DeSir and her Gran DeSir.

**Ingham:** This will be your first scene all together, so let's have you three meet for the first time. Within an hour of arriving to the Far West Gygravagnite Research Institute by helicopter, in your case Jeff, or by plane as it is for you, Blade, you two are met by a bearded man in a lab coat and a woman that appears to be about your age at the airport. You've seen him in the news and heard enough to know he's the reason you are here.

Professor Tendo clears his throat. "Hello, I'm Professor Tendo and I am in charge of this place.

This here is Maria DeSir. She will be your acting captain and squad leader." He'll offer a handshake. Maya, introduce Maria.

**Maya:** I'm a tall and long haired brunette with blue eyes and dressed in casual clothes. Maria gives a small wave, "Hi," and will also extend a hand.

**Raymond:** Blade has tanned skin of matching black eyes and hair, with the face of someone who is very serious by nature. He's in BDUs and is clearly well-toned. "I'm Blade Farran, pleased to meet you." He shakes Maria's hand firmly but loose enough.

**Ryu:** Okay, my go. Jeff is excited and a bit nervous, I guess. He's in a shirt and jeans, and is another brunette too, with short spiky hair. He'll greet the professor and captain. "I'm Jeff Gons but just call me Jeff." He'll also give Blade a hand trying to make friends.

**Raymond:** What is his shake like?

**Ryu:** Um, lax I think.

**Raymond:** Blade has a **strong** grip for him.

**Ryu:** Ow. Jeff doesn't show it but he didn't like that much.

**Raymond:** Good. Ingham, does that count for the development of my Theme as Rival?

**Ingham:** Not yet, bully him some more later and we'll see if you get points.

**Raymond:** Will do.

**Ryu:** Hey, you don't have to put it like that! And... I'm kind of new to this. Um, am I supposed to be acting when speaking in character?

**Maya:** You don't have to do more than speak in character to act out your PC. Don't worry if you're the shy type, though do try to loosen up! No one is going to eat you.

**Raymond:** Or they shouldn't.

**Maya:** If people started biting each other during play, I'd be pretty intimidated too.

**Ingham:** Ahem. Professor Tendo motions towards a nearby black car, and a suit opens one of the doors for you. "Come on, I'll tell you about this island and show you around the base as we get there."

**Ryu:** "Oh, but we just got these." Jeff holds up a visitor's pamphlet.

**Maya:** Maria grins. "Those are all wrong, what we're going to show you is not in a pamphlet."

## Your PC and You

This book will switch between second and third person a lot, and will oftentimes refer to your PC as 'you,' the reader. General statements about the rules or aspects of them will use the third person, while specific talk about abilities the PCs themselves may possess will use the second person.

This is a method that most RPGs employ to help you immerse yourself in your character so that portraying them is easier, not because we think you are your character – or that we endorse anyone who thinks that way. While being really into your character is a lot of fun for some, this is but a humble game that is not going to tell you how much you have to invest into it to have some fun with your friends. With that said, do remember that you are to fill your PC's shoes and decide where he or she goes, who they are friends and enemies with, what they hold dear and what they despise.



# Glossary

## Setting Terminology

**Actor:** The name given to the pilot of a Gear to distinguish them from the pilots of aircraft, and the act of piloting is known as Enacting, though some still refer to them to as pilots or drivers colloquially and misname enacting likewise.

**Board:** The acronym for the Broad Operations Assessment and Reaction Device, and sometimes called 'AI Drone' in place of their abbreviated name: a Board is a war machine entirely controlled by a computer and supervised by an officer who oversees a group of them at once.

**Clarke Foundation:** The organization in the space colonies tasked with investigating Cryptid Activity.

**Cryptid:** The unifying term for the strange creatures seen in the Far West Archipelago, suspected to be behind the disappearances and the outbreak of illnesses in Neo Easter II and other areas before the arrival of the Outsiders.

**Far West Archipelago:** A chain of islands that rose from the pacific in the years after the Ring of Fire Tragedy, it is currently the heart of the resistance opposing both the UEF and the Outsiders.

**Gear:** An abbreviation of General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robot that replaced the original name in all but the most technical of texts. The one true war machine that maximizes an individual soldier's potential.

**Glory:** The UEF's next-gen line of Gears, of which only a few exist and most are assigned under a single squad to hunt down and destroy the resistance's Wagner.

**Gygravagnite:** Usually called Element G or by the specific form it takes after being processed and refined, Gygravagnite is a self-replicating mineral which is highly radioactive and unstable, and a crucial element to the technology in the new world.

**Hiryu:** A small chain of three islands west of the Outsider mothership. It is the new capital of the Far West Archipelago after it declared its independence from the UEF, as well as the first and last defense line stopping the Outsiders from wrecking havoc on the rest of Asia.

**Gear Armed Forces:** The UEF's primary army, almost entirely consisting of Gears and support for them, it is strongest in the American continent where Boards are less prolific.

**Outsiders:** The Alien presence that wiped out most of the spacenoids and got the UEF to surrender in barely over a day, these giant monsters occasionally leave their mothership at Neo Easter II to analyze and tear apart mankind's Gygravagnite-based creations.

**PsAICon:** The revolutionary thought-interpretation method used by Gears to allow an Actor a level of control over their machine almost as perfect as the one over their own body.

**Revolutionary Unified Front:** The RUF, or simply 'the Guerilla', is a group with the goal of taking the UEF's totalitarian regime down and counterattacking against the Outsiders instead of living in fear.

**Ring of Fire Tragedy:** The event that shook the foundations of the world in 2027, though attributed to an impact event, many other theories circle about these days.

**Safe Zone:** The cities built by the UEF to keep the civilians where they could see them and to stop them from standing up against the Outsiders. There's only a handful per country, resulting in a very unhealthy lifestyle inside their tightly packed Sanctuary District ghettos.

**Soaring Dragon Fortress:** The base of operations for the Hiryu's guerilla efforts, producing top of the line Gears capable of standing up to individual Outsiders.

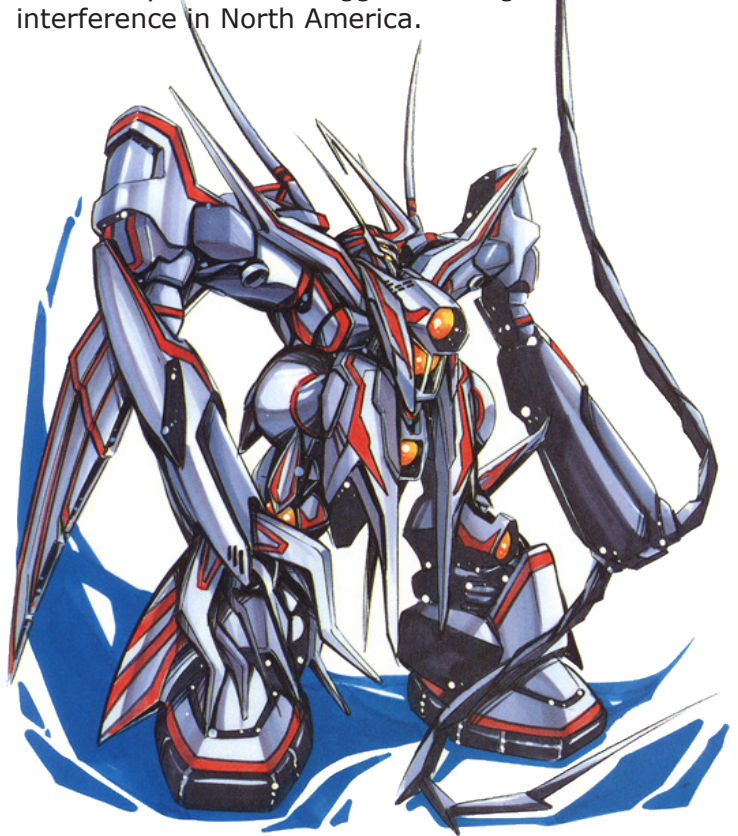
**Solar Space Alliance:** The primary rival of the UEF before they were decimated by the Outsiders, the few remaining colonies of the Verne cluster keep to themselves and don't meddle in the affairs of Earthnoids or their inscrutable rulers.

**Subjugation:** The time period in which the Battle of the 23 Hours, the surrender to the Outsiders, and the reorganization of UEF territory took place.

**United Earth Federation:** The organization that replaced the UN as a peacekeeping organization in favor of a more 'hands-on' approach to maintaining order and protecting their space elevator, and the current rulers of the Earth Sphere with their headquarters being in Boston.

**Verne Military Police:** The Colonies' other, actually official, Gear-using peacekeeping organization.

**Wagner, Mobile Battleship:** The world's first flying airship, sporting such technologies unseen before such as true Anti-Gravity, intelligent AIs, and forcefields. It is the RHUF's flagship and continually runs itself ragged causing maximum interference in North America.



## System Terminology

**Action:** Something a character does that takes up a considerable amount of time, of which they can only do one per Turn. Actions usually require Tests.

**Advantage:** A circumstance that can be internal or external that gives a character better chances of success at a Test, allowing them to roll an additional die and keep the better result of the two rolls.

**Ally:** Any other character or Unit that is friendly to yours. You may designate who is and who is not your Ally at will for the purpose of abilities that depend on it, including yourself.

**Area:** Where Upgrades and Weapons are allocated to or held by a Gear. If an Area is Maimed, all Upgrades and Weapons stored in it stop working.

**Attribute:** Name of the three numerical statistics that define a character's physical, mental and social prowess - Fitness, Intellect and Empathy.

**Base Mechanics:** A Gear's principal statistics - Evasion, Armor, Energy, Threshold, Accuracy and Penetration. Base Mechanics are the numbers the Gear starts with and any static modifiers.

**Chassis:** The source of a Gear's Base Mechanics, or the initial statistics that define what it can and can not do, as well as its potential to store Upgrades and Weapons.

**Condition:** A debilitating status inflicted by certain Weapons, with a fixed duration and specific effects depending on the type of Condition.

**Consequence:** A Disadvantage that results from losing a Layer of Plot Armor attached to an individual Attribute, Consequences affect all Tests made using that Attribute until the damage dealt to the Plot Armor is healed.

**Damage:** What happens to a Character or Gear when their Defenses, don't suffice to hold back offensive Tests at bay.

**Defense:** Collective name for the three numerical statistics that measure a character's ability to resist other's influence, Physically, Mentally or Emotionally.

**Design:** The fundamental Upgrade present in a Gear that separates it from all others. Every Gear has one such Upgrade (assigned to its Core at no Cost) and may not have more than one.

**Difficulty Number (DN):** The value you check against to see whether your Test succeeds or not. Results depend on whether you meet it or not, and by how much.

**Disadvantage:** A circumstance that makes it considerably harder for any character to perform Tests, a Disadvantage forces a character to roll twice on a Test and take the worst result of the two dice rolled.

**Dramatic Theme:** One of the three running motifs that a PC has and develops through the course of the Episodes, awarding them Genre Points when they meaningfully contribute to the game - the types are Reason, Typecast and Bane.

**Duel:** When two opposing Units become entrenched in close quarters combat, making it considerably harder for anyone else to attack either of them without harming the other by mistake.

**Enemy:** Any other character or Unit that opposes yours; you may designate anyone else as an Opponent at any time. Try not to be too much of a traitorous prick.

**Enhancement:** A purchasable improvement to a Gear's Base Mechanics or to its Upgrades. Enhancements may be purchased at any time other than during a Gear's construction.

**Experience Points (XP):** A measure of a PC's growth as a character. A PC gains XP at the end of an Episode and for every time they gain XP they also receive the same amount of PP and UP.

**Genre Master:** The game's arbiter, a player with the special role of directing the supporting cast, intervening when there are rules disputes, and keeping the game flowing from one Scene to another.

**Genre Points:** PCs and the strongest of NPCs possess Genre Points, which add to a Character's Defenses and Initiative, in addition to serving as fuel for Genre Powers during Gear Operations. Once a Genre Point is spent, it is gone, but you gain another at the beginning of every Episode and for good roleplaying.

**Genre Powers:** A Genre Power is an unique and powerful ability that requires Genre Points to use, because of this they are anything but commonplace.

**Initiative:** A character or Unit's place within a given Round's order, with the highest Initiative going first and progressing down to whoever has the lowest.

**Intermission:** A collection of Scenes that do not involve the use of Gears by default. Though they may do so, they are not planned with Gear combat in mind.

**Maim:** The disabling of a Gear's Areas to nullify the Upgrades and Weapons it holds. You may choose to Maim an Area when you cause another Gear's Threshold to be reduced to 0, and you choose which Area. The Core may not be Maimed unless it has ejected first.

**Match:** A Scene in which characters are competing with each other via Opposed Tests, either because it has been engineered to happen that way or the Scene simply turned out that way.

**Move:** The act of moving a Zone when you take your Action, you must Move before doing the Action proper, and if you cannot take an Action this Turn you cannot Move.

**Nature:** One of the four archetypal character temperaments available to choose during Character creation, a Nature will provide your PC with an array of bonuses to all Attributes, Plot Armor and a selection of Genre Powers to choose from - the Prodigy, the Ace, the Coordinator, or the Professional.

**Non-Player Character (NPC):** A bit of a misnomer, since the character is controlled by the GM, but it is different enough from 'real' PCs to warrant a simple distinction.



**Operation:** A Scene revolving around combat between multiple Gears.

**Pilot Points (PP):** An abstraction of what a character has learned, how much they have trained, and their general improvement over the course of the Episodes. You spend PP to purchase Attributes, Skills, Defenses and Traits for a PC.

**Player Character (PC):** A character that is controlled by a player as their avatar in the game.

**Plot Armor:** A character's security blanket preventing others from having their ways with him or her. Plot Armor has four Layers, their gradual loss places a character closer to meeting a grim fate, though this Damage does heal with time. Plot Armor comes in three types: Grit, Drive, and Wisdom.

**Range:** A measure of a weapon's effective area of influence.

**Scene:** A short time period enough to cover one plot point, or a transition between two plot points. Usually Scenes end when the PCs move from one location to another, a dramatic entrance or departure takes place, or there is a 'timeskip' between events.

**Round:** The period of time that covers everyone getting a Turn going by the Initiative order. Once everyone has had a Turn, the current Round ends, Tension increases by 1, and a new Round begins. The duration of abilities measured in Rounds is from the perspective of the user, for instance: An effect that lasts one Round ends at the beginning of the user's next Turn, not when Initiative is reset and Tension increases.

**Skill:** A character's theoretical and practical know-how of an individual subject, measured in a numerical by its Skill Rank. Skills can be broad in the bonus they grant or Specialized for an extra Advantage in their dominion at the cost of a Disadvantage outside their field of expertise.

**Tension:** A bonus to Tests made during Matches and Operations that is equal to the number of Rounds that have transpired thus far, and a bonus to offensive Tests, and representing the wear and fatigue of constant combat.

**Terrain:** A given section of the battlefield during an Operation, divided into Zones, it may or may not have unique properties that play a role in helping or complicating those within it.

**Test:** The act of rolling 1d10 plus modifiers (if any) against a given DN, usually requiring an Action. There are many different kinds of Tests, but the majority of them are of the same three basic types - Skill Tests, Opposed Tests and Extended Tests.

**Trait:** A particular characteristic of a PC that is important enough to warrant a representation by the rules but is neither an Attribute, Skill or Defense.

**Turn:** Any one character's chance to do something with their Actions during a Round, as assigned by the Initiative order. Turns are divided in Phases to help the character's controller make decisions and conceptualize what occurs in them.

**Unit:** Used to refer to both an Actor and their Gear as a single entity in the game rules.

**Upgrade:** A single ability possessed by a Gear, usually defensive in nature and bending the general rules of the game at least a little. Upgrades can only be bought at the beginning of a new Episode Arc or during the Gear's construction.

**Upgrade Points (UP):** An abstraction of how a Gear is augmented through the course of the Episodes. You spend UP to purchase Upgrades and Enhancements for your Gear.

**Weapon:** The offensive counterpart to Upgrades. Weapons are pretty self-explanatory and are all unique in some fashion, each having their own Range, Areas it can be allocated to, bonuses to Accuracy and Penetration, and so on.

**Zone:** An abstraction of the distance that a Gear can move in a single Turn.



# CHAPTER 2

THE WORLD





## A History Lesson

### 2027: The Ring of Fire Tragedy

During the First of December, at three in the morning Greenwich Mean Time, the strongest megathrust earthquake ever recorded in history catastrophically ruptured the crust near the Galapagos. All but a few population centers in the Pacific islands were submerged within minutes. The magnitude of the quake was rated as a nearly unthinkable 10.5, almost literally off the charts and larger than any earthquake previously measured by a factor of ten.

The earthquake triggered a series of massive tsunamis along the coastlines nearby, killing over five million people in two dozen countries. The massive waves went on to strike every coast along the Pacific Ocean claiming the lives of millions more.

The Ring of Fire Tragedy became the deadliest natural disaster in history, and several countries collapsed as infrastructure was washed out to sea and coastlines changed in an instant.

Years later, the First of December would be made a holiday in thirty-five countries across the Pacific Rim. The Pacific Memorial Day, held in remembrance of the countless lives lost.

### 2028: The Rebirth of the Pacific

In the wake of the disaster and continuing aftershocks that claimed even more lives and hampered efforts to rebuild, the governments of Polynesia, Japan and other 'Australasian' nations merged with the rest of Oceania under the banner of the United Pacific in an attempt to stabilize their economic positions. The United Pacific capitol was placed in New Guinea, which had succeeded in rebuilding its lost infrastructure to a substantial degree and was, thus, a boon to the planning and implementation of further efforts to reclaim the Pacific.

The Ring of Fire, meanwhile, continued to destabilize. The aftershocks had awakened several sleeping volcanoes across the Pacific Rim. Furthermore, near the epicenter of the disaster, there was an unprecedented collapse of the Earth's crust, leading to a massive magma upwelling that boiled the ocean for a thousand miles around. A group of islands began to form, and over eight years it would grow into an archipelago the size of Argentina, eventually named simply: the Far West Archipelago (FWA).

### 2029-2033: The Rise of the United Pacific

As the aftershocks died down, the Pacific Rim stabilized and reconstruction efforts began in earnest. The business proving to be a tremendous boost to the economies of several flagging world powers. The United Pacific became the key player in these efforts by providing adequate staging grounds for distributing aid and directing efforts. Eventually, it was recognized as sovereign nation in its own right by the UN replacing the old Polynesian governments for good.

The United Pacific grew quickly and well, thanks to having a brand-new infrastructure and the most modern education and technology available from its high density of trained professionals. Its fertile soil allowed it to produce surprising yields of crops, and by the mid-late 2030's, it was producing enough to export to other nations.

It wasn't only in the United Pacific farms that life was reclaiming lost ground. Hardy grasses and simple plants rapidly flowered across the entirety of the FWA amid the volcanic rock. Groups of Geologists studied the island chain in fascination, as the huge magma upwelling did in a mere decade what normally took centuries.

### 2027 Theories

The cause of the Ring of Fire Tragedy is generally agreed by the scientific and mainstream communities to have been caused by a massive upthrust earthquake that had been on the verge for years.

However, the wave patterns that developed from it, and a great deal of anomalous data from seismic sensors and weather satellites, have led to a number of other theories. The most prominent of them is that a meteor less than a kilometer wide impacted the ocean, a theory supported by tests that show an unusual amount of iridium in debris layers from the time of impact.

Other fringe theories blame secret weapon tests, biblical prophecies, and even alien robots living in the Earth's mantle which is of course a silly idea.



### 2034-2040: The World's new Major Player

As the United Pacific became capable of supporting its own population without relying on aid and imported goods, being nearly fully self-sufficient, it imposed tariffs on imported manufactured goods in an attempt to grow its own economy further.

Several large multinational corporations refused to do business in The United Pacific with the tariffs in place, withdrawing their support. Unemployment soared to one in five citizens affected within a week as the jobs simply vanished, companies pulling out overnight.

The economic ramifications led to the government of the United Pacific instituting massive public works projects. With the suddenly massive work force in hand, beautiful, massive structures, perfectly planned cities, and works of art that are to this day considered some of the finest made in a century are constructed.

As the construction projects got under way, the United Pacific appealed to the UN for rights to colonize the FWA to reduce pressure on their island populations, now starting to boom in the wake of their rise to world power status. UNESCO, rumored to be under pressure by older world powers, declared the FWA a World Heritage Site and prohibited human habitation, as the newly formed islands were a treasure to science.

In the summer of 2040, a man attempted to claim a homestead in the Far West chain, setting up a camp amongst the volcanic rocks. He was removed before the end of the year. Other animals began colonizing the island as larger plant life took root. The sea around the island, once a barren waste from the heat produced in its formation, cooled enough for fish to live there again.



### 2041-2044: The Energy Crisis

The long-predicted crisis of Peak Oil finally occurred, and worldwide oil production dropped slowly but steadily. The price of oil shot through the roof, and most energy corporations were forced to merge or sell off their assets. By the end of 2044, there were only two multinational energy corporations left in the world, the American-based Standard Energy and its sole competitor, British Alternative.

Standard Energy led the market and met demand with cutthroat and often blatantly illegal business practices, while British Alternative peddled renewable but inefficient energy.

Worldwide crop yields dropped as fertilizers became scarce and harvesting and transporting goods became more expensive. The exports from The United Pacific and their naturally bountiful volcanic soil re-invigorated their economy, reversing their economic crash, eventually joining the G9.

### 2045: The Discovery of Gygravagnite

In 2043, a geologist named Locke Gravagne that had been part of a field team studying the FWA was found to have cancer, and it was quickly determined that he had received a massive dose of radiation.

Over the next two years, investigation led to samples he had taken from the FWA, and then to the islands themselves. A novel mineral, highly radioactive but otherwise superficially indistinguishable from jasper was found and named Gygravagnite after the lucky geologist whose illness had led to its discovery.

Field studies found that the majority of islands in the archipelago contained the mineral in negligible quantities, similar to distribution of a rare gemstone.

However, the largest island, that of Neo Easter II directly over the the center of the magma upwelling, had a motherlode of Gygravagnite.

Studies on the mineral determined that it had many strange qualities. It had extreme durability and heat resistance, but, vastly more importantly, it acted as an energy source. Minute changes to its environment led to vastly differing outputs of radiation, with seemingly no drop off or half-life. The laws of conservation of energy did not seem to apply to Gygravagnite.

In November, 2045, the laboratories researching the mineral on-site on the FWA were destroyed in a massive explosion along with the small island they had been located on. Satellite imaging showed a fireball over 40 kilometers in radius, along with a massive gamma ray burst. Continuation of the research was called into question, and information on the incident was suppressed.



## 2046-2050: Infinite Power

With huge amounts of funding from the UN, British Alternative undertook the Unendlich Plan, a dedicated attempt to harness the power of Gygravagnite's variable radiation level as a power source.

After four years, several accidents (including one major accident that led to a release of radiation in a populated area), a series of specific methods were hashed out to make use of the mineral's properties.

Gygravagnite's natural state was named as Type R (apparently for 'Room Temperature,' though the variables involved consist of far more than that). It was found that, in addition to its radioactivity and toughness, it was unstable, and would slowly self-replicate, restructuring olivine and similar minerals.

A second form, Type Y, was produced after considerable UV irradiation to restructure its crystal matrices. Type Y Gygravagnite was discovered to be superconductive at virtually all temperatures, and looks like a pale yellow translucent material with properties similar to glass.

Type W Gygravagnite was made by dissolving the crystals in mercury and had somewhat non-Newtonian properties, hardening under stress to levels vastly superior than even Type R's considerable durability.

After the properties of modified Gygravagnite were published, British Alternative's net worth quickly exceeded that of Standard Energy. The UNESCO ban on disturbance of the FWA was lifted in the closing months of 2050.

The word 'Gygravagnite' enters colloquial parlance, and is quickly shortened to '3G', 'Element G' or simply 'Gygs'.

## 2051-2054: The Technological Revolution

Under total secrecy, a colossal chunk of Gygravagnite was transported to American shores by the Pacific Fleet, ultimately to go to Boston. Later in the year, Standard Energy set up its own research labs, funded by the US Government and emptying its own coffers to match British Alternative's lead. Under the banner of subsidiary companies, Standard Energy invested in "Reconstruction Effort" mining colonies around the Far West Archipelago.

The United Pacific was more than willing to provide cheap labor for these mining colonies, instilling new life into its economy while signing rights of First Refusal with many of the groups doing the mining. The material proved easy to mine and vast quantities of the mineral were removed from the volcanic rock of the islands.

With the people of the world desperate for a new energy source and Gygravagnite able to provide until-then unparalleled power, it became the nucleus of a new industrial age. With room-temperature superconductors, light materials of a hardness higher than 15 in the Mohs scale, and near-infinite supplies of power, once-unthinkable applications of science became within reach.

At the end of 2054, Project Helios was announced. Its purpose was to build an orbital elevator system to combat overpopulation and expand the frontiers of humanity to the stars, with the ideal construction point being on one of the Far West islands. Plans were drawn up to enable the mining of asteroids.

Project Helios is approved by nearly every country with presence in the UN. Construction by British Alternative is scheduled to begin in June of 2055, and expected to take ten years.

As an oddly appropriate footnote to this human resurgence, earthquakes worldwide receded in occurrence and magnitude.

## 2055-2058: The New World Government

Terrorism quickly became the main opponent of Project Helios. In just half a year, almost a dozen attempts were made to undermine the project from the inside or destroy it from without.

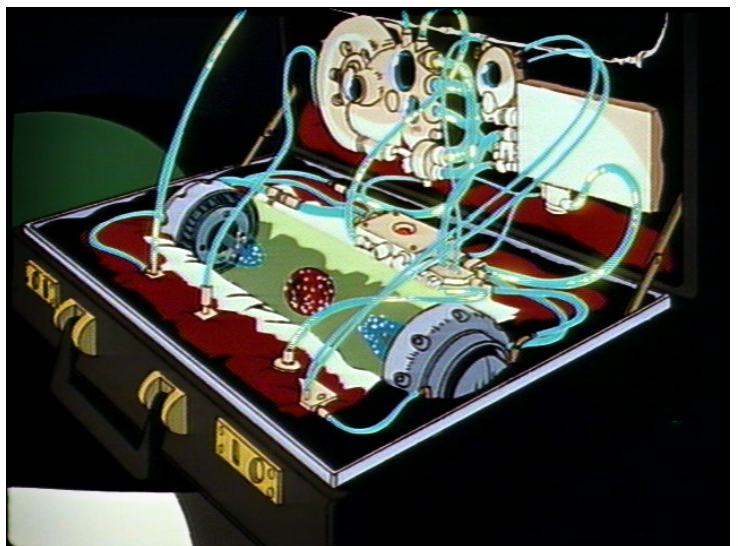
The attacks came from all quarters, with groups varying from religious fanatics to ecoterrorists. Several of the attempts are thought to originate from Standard Energy, but the connections are never proven strongly enough to bring them to justice.

It is at around this time that a serious political movement towards a one world government began, and after spending two years being debated back and forth, the motion finally passed.

The UN was given stronger powers over sovereign nations and restructured as the United Earth Federation, with the purpose of protecting humanity's better interests above any single nation or government, losing its conciliatory role. The major players in the UEF were: America, the United Pacific, and the European Union due to their efforts into the success of Project Helios and the Unendlich Plan.

Standard Energy's own research into Gygravagnite resulted in the creation of an all-purpose kinetic pod, in 2056, which was able to manipulate kinetic energy to use as a propulsor or even a crude shield against projectiles. This is quickly adapted into military hardware, its small size making it suitable for mounting on the then in-development powered armor being designed by DARPA.

Under extremely favorable conditions, the armor was capable of deflecting a 15mm round, and is able to achieve maglev flight under its own power. This marked the beginning of modern warfare in the same way the first crude tanks in World War I marked the beginning of the first age of mechanized war.



## 2059-2062: Intelligent Weapons

In 2059, the first "true" AI was developed in Japan as part of the Unendlich Plan. Gygravagnite was an integral part of its design, perfect crystals of the mineral being used as its central chips, isolating the miniaturized quantum computers from external factors.

The first prototype models proved capable of basic sapience, though it was only competent at performing the simplest of tasks and had to be taught via programming in a process akin to training an animal. Yet, they were more than advanced enough to replace humans in dangerous working environments.

After proving their worth in the dangerous Gygravagnite mines, the advanced robotics base became a staple of consumer technology.

By 2062, the UEF deployed AI-driven military drones under the codename of BOARD -Broad Operations Assessment and Reaction Devices- and their intelligent automated mobile weapons quelled terrorist cells around the orbital elevator, with survivors being arrested and shipped away to prisons in the darkest places of the world, never to be seen again.

The head of the Japanese AI project resigned when he learned the military was using his designs to kill, and retired to work on his own projects. Ironically enough, he would later uncover the secret to nanotechnology, which would see similar ends.

The UEF Headquarters was moved from New York City to Boston at the behest of Standard Energy, in return for supplying the UEF with advanced weapons and armor.

Nerds worldwide speculated the technological singularity was at hand and welcomed their new robotic overlords.

### The G Incident

The destruction of the first Gygravagnite laboratories is almost always thought to have been the result of scientists working with a material they didn't understand and having it blow up in their faces as a result of an unwise test or simple mistake. While the lists of tests scheduled for that day doesn't reveal anything dangerous, it's possible the scientists were doing research that was being kept off the records – or as some suggest, that the lab was destroyed on purpose, by a nuclear device.

Reports that some of the scientists were seen later in other countries are unsubstantiated and remain only that, rumors, though later Gygravagnite research in some nations seemed unusually developed and mature for programs starting from near-scratch.

Conspiracy theorists still hold to this day that the official listing of casualties is incomplete or made up, with a multitude of alleged professionals from fields that have little to nothing to do with physics and chemistry having gone missing since then.

## 2063-2064: The New Frontier

As the Helios Tether neared completion, automated drones were launched to Lagrange 1 and the asteroid 6 Hebe, the latter chosen as a site for mining raw materials because its placement favored sending material into Earth-crossing orbits.

In 2063, construction began on the first space colony as raw material was streamed in from the asteroid belt. Working tirelessly, the drones completed the space colony before the first day of 2064.

This first space colony had a habitable area of over two hundred square kilometers and, with regular deliveries of volatiles from the asteroid belt and its automated miners, was designed to be able to function as a completely independent city-state, not relying on the Earth for supplies aside from seeds to start growing crops and people to live there.

The wealthy and influential leave Earth for the colony and the eleven more that are constructed after the first are a success. The elite of humanity begin to govern the world from the literal heavens.

The Unendlich Plan bore fruit once more, when a pair of Russian scientists devised a way to cause a controlled degeneracy chain using fractured Gygravagnite crystals. The energy released allowed for launching a particle beam of immense destructive power without need of an unwieldy particle accelerator, making it practical for use as a weapon. Though the UEF officially had no enemies to use it against, it quickly adopts these "Beam Weapons" and orders Standard Energy to refine it, much to the worries of the pacifists.

## 2064-2070: Anxiety in the Far West

With the area flourishing thanks to hard work of its colonists, Gygravagnite mines, the UEF's support, and Project Helios, the Far West Archipelago had been almost entirely developed, resembling the rest of the United Pacific area, though some islands and stretches of land remained too radioactive for humans to live in. These areas were inevitably near high concentrations of Gygravagnite.

Rumors spread among the FWA citizens about strange creatures roaming in the most barren and radiation-filled areas of land. Most people dismissed these rumors as just tall tales, mistaking mutated or diseased animals as something more sinister. Despite the fact that a total of eight miners disappeared under mysterious circumstances during this time period and thirteen more were hospitalized after demonstrating irreparable mental instability, nothing official is ever said on the matter.

Investigations were discouraged as conditions in the mines are often in violation of international labor laws, and refineries were working under unsafe conditions to meet costs, often dumping waste into the ocean or simply burying it in shallow pits.



## 2071-2075: The Solar Space Alliance

As the class division between those on Earth and in Space grew, unrest rose on Earth as many felt that the policies being enacted by the UEF were favoring the privileged minority that had left for the space colonies. These Colonials had a vastly disproportionate influence on the UEF, and a spreading popular movement called for them to lose their grip on the Earth, pejoratively dubbing them 'Spacenoids'.

With great reluctance, the colonies withdrew from the UEF and formed their own governmental body, the Solar Space Alliance (SSA). Over several years, they completely severed political ties from the Earth and functioned as truly independent nations. Some trade continued, since there were many crops that did not grow well in space and the Earth was willing to pay a high price for rare earth metals easily mined in asteroids.

After twenty-years time, UEF Gygravagnite Type-R 'seed mines' failed to bear worthwhile fruit, the resulting harvest being akin to a year's worth of hard labor and further attempts are deemed a waste of perfectly useable resources. The SSA continued research on the conditions required to turn Type-R into a proverbial hen of golden eggs, despite owning a fair amount of Gygravagnite mines on Earth. Thusly, in 2075, the SSA constructed the largest Type-R seed mine to date on the moon for this purpose.

## 2076-2079: The Sun, Moon and Stars

As negotiations for Gygravagnite mining colonies increased in tension – many on Earth believing that the Colonies were trying to grab a larger piece of the pie than they were entitled to – the SSA used their stores of automated workers to mine various moons in the solar system in search of alternative energy sources while waiting for their Type-R colonies to bloom.

Internal conflicts within the UEF led to various "leaks" of bizarre occurrences and strange hazards at major Gygravagnite plants across the globe. Standard Energy and British Alternative continued their battle with disinformation and corporate sabotage.

As a result of the increasing tension and the proliferation of 'accidents,' Gygravagnite research and the Unendlich Plan were divided into three major projects with increased oversight. Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne continued the research on Gygravagnite weaponry, vehicles, and AI respectively.

### The Far West Cryptids

While officially, the existence of the Far West Cryptids is denied, the locals can tell you a lot of stories about them. Everything from giant bugs and animate vegetation to strange people-like things that defy any easy description.

They might be mutated local wildlife, as some officials have suggested, or they could be something more menacing. One local man claims he broke open a rock and something indescribable and terrible was sealed right there the stone, flying away after he cracked it open. These and other anecdotes point towards the Cryptids somehow being a natural part of the island, assuming they exist at all.

## 2080-2085: The New Cold War

In early April of 2083, the central Gygravagnite refinery in the United Pacific suffered a terrible accident and was lost in a massive explosion. Radioactive fallout spread over much of South America, and comparisons to Chernobyl were plentiful, especially in the wake of a tragic rise in still-births and terrible birth defects. Public opinion of the UEF was devastated after this so-called Neo Easter II Incident.

The UEF managed to keep control of Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne through the crisis, though rumors of sabotage and betrayal from within abounded after the SSA unveiled and demonstrated its new all-terrain Gygravagnite powered AI war machine, developed from their more advanced and mature automated worker drones.

Many suspect the SSA's new war machine to have been designed and developed by the AIs themselves, but such is never proven.

While there are no formal declarations of hostilities, both the SSA and the UEF made unfriendly overtures towards one another, and embassies on both sides were closed. Both sides began broadcasting propaganda that informed their citizens that the other side was strangling them and preventing them from accessing resources that they desperately needed to survive.

The UEF claimed the SSA had control of greater Gygravagnite supplies than they needed, while the SSA decried the UEF and said their limiting of raw materials was putting a bottleneck on the SSA economy and endangering the very future of mankind.

It is no surprise then, that comparisons to the Cold War of the previous century were in no short supply throughout the early to mid 80's.



## 2086-2090: Alien Subjugation

In 2086, the heads of Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne suddenly vanished along with their best staff, leaving no traces of their research other than vague notes and oral records about "General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robots" or "Gears". Their disappearance was at first thought to be a mass defection to the SSA, and nearly sparked a war then and there.

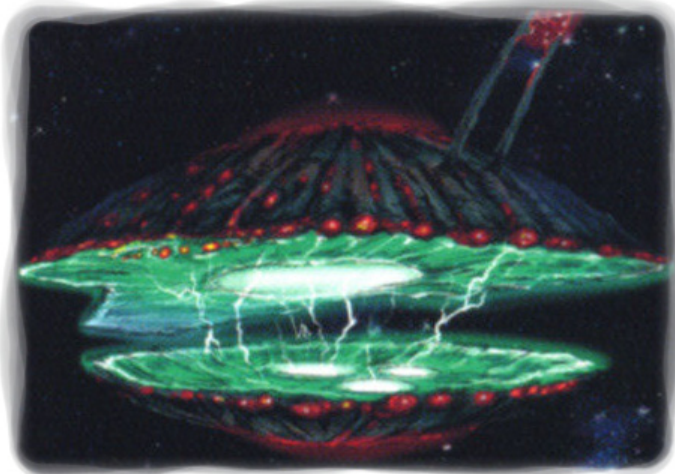
Before shots are fired, however, a single enormous spaceship of clearly Alien nature arrived from an unknown origin point and began approaching the Earth sphere. Though initially humanity was ecstatic, attempts at making contact with the aliens fail and marvel turns to worry when the spaceship is estimated to be in a collision course with three space colonies, due in a single day's time.

Inevitably, the ship intersected the colonies in its direct path, destroying them and ending the lives of all that failed to evacuate, while the alien ship, unharmed, continued to head towards the Earth itself. The SSA treats this as an act of aggression and opens fire on the Aliens. The population of the colonies was summarily decimated as the ship retaliated, leaving two of the ten space colonies open to vacuum and the others damaged, some beyond repair. What is later called the Battle of the 23 Hours ended when the Aliens destroyed the SSA headquarters, leaving all but one cluster of colonies in ruins.

In short order, the spaceship landed over the epicenter of the Neo Easter II Incident and from there made demands to negotiate with the UEF, using messages broadcast in every major language on Earth.

The entity or entities in the ship remained nameless, refusing to identify themselves. Ambassadors of the UEF are taken into the ship at an arranged time and some form of peace with what they call "The Outsiders" was agreed upon, though exactly what the agreements or deals were remain top secret.

After completing negotiations, the UEF exercised its power over the Earth with an iron fist, forcing civilians to relocate into "safe" zones where the UEF could control and direct their lives so as not to interfere with The Outsiders. To this end, they used leftovers from the vanished Sonne, Mond, and Sterne projects to create their own Gear Armed Forces (GAF), filling in the gaps of their knowledge and research with what was obviously alien technology.



## 2091: The Rebellion

Even the Safe Zones proved far from exactly safe. Giant Outsiders, thoroughly alien and each unique, occasionally wandered away from their base over the old Neo Easter II site and terrorized the populace outside the government protected areas in the FWA before retreating back whence they came.

Their purposes and motivations are still unknown, though they always leave a trail of destruction and the dead behind them.

A resistance movement called the Revolutionary Unified Front (RUF) formed within the confines of the North-Eastern American Safe Zone and revolts, forming an organized group to give humanity a symbol to rally around, standing up to the Alien threat and the GAF that tried to suppress them with their own superior brand of Gears. The technology of the RUF Gears appeared to have come from the vanished Sonne, Mond, and Sterne projects, entirely human and home-grown... And in some ways, more advanced than the alien leavings the UEF received like scraps from the table of their masters.

Their propaganda portrayed the Outsiders as having come to stop the evil SSA from taking over the Earth and helping to repair the damage done to Neo Easter II. The Rebellion is mostly reported as minor unrest and civil disturbances in the UEF controlled areas.

Open actions against the Far West rebels by the UEF were and are uncommon, the UEF too busy quelling the resistance on its own soil, preferring to blockade and starve the rebelling areas out. Those rebels that were able to become self-sufficient continued the fight, while others fell and were quietly purged or sent to re-education camps.



### The UEF's Deal

While no one outside of the very top of the UEF knows the exact details of their dealings with The Outsiders, it's clear that the Deal isn't one that benefits most of humanity.

The UEF has harsh crackdowns on anyone who thinks of rebelling against them or standing up against the Outsiders, and it has been suggested that the upper echelons of the UEF aren't really human anymore at all. Some say that humans are just being kept alive as slaves or food or some kind of sick entertainment for the aliens.

What is certain is that the UEF is getting plenty of alien technology in exchange for serving their alien masters. Perhaps they learned something inside that ship that makes them think this is the best they can do for humanity. Perhaps they're greedy. Or perhaps the Outsiders are really trying to help humanity as best they can, with alien logic we can't even guess at.

### 2095: The Repulsion Line

In 2095, guerrillas on the Far West island of Hiryu enjoyed their first victory against The Outsiders as they repelled one of the giant aliens from their city with their home-made one-of-a-kind Gears.

While this was their first victory, it was far from their last, and their determination to fight quickly showed itself as their island was turned into a front-line Military City and a staging point against the Outsiders.

Despite attacks by more giant monsters, the fortress the Hiryujin had built, the Soaring Dragon Fortress, doesn't fall. Indeed, to this day it is a symbol of humanity's ability to defeat the alien invaders.

The UEF declared Hiryujin guerrillas and The Revolutionary Unified Front to be traitors to the human race, endangering the treaties that the UEF said were for humanity's own good.

### 2099: The Cryptid Menace

In the darkness of space, in the mostly forgotten but not yet gone space colonies, the bizarre creatures known as the Far West Cryptids are sighted once more. Already reduced to a shadow of its former self, the SSA is struck by a rash of disappearances and mental illnesses.

The remaining space colonies suppressed any news about their problems to the outside, effectively blacking out the Earth from their communications. Most suspect that, with the UEF already showing their own citizens the iron fist, the last thing the SSA wanted in its weakened state was to show them just how vulnerable they really were.

A new conflict in Lagrange 2 began against this new spaceborne threat, far away from where the UEF could enforce its laws, and apparently outside the influence of the Outsiders as well. The colonies' Clarke Foundation and its Gears were and are the only ones able to neutralize and put a stop to the Cryptids.

The SSA formally outlawed all trading with Earth, even trade in Gygravagnite, at this point and cut off contact with the Earth officially in its entirety.

Several of the most badly-damaged space colonies are left empty and adrift as the SSA centralizes its population. Rumors persisted of massive warships being built in the asteroid belt and preparations made to move a large part of the SSA's remaining population, if not the entirety of it.

### 2100: The World as it Stands

Present Day. Present Time. The Earth sphere is engulfed in the flames of war in at least three separate, yet related conflicts.



## A Brave New World

Society has come a long way since the early twenty-first century, and many of the advancements since then are taken for granted a hundred years later. Although the current state of the world is not anywhere near ydillic, many can still remember the years gone by when the future of humanity looked bright – at least if you were from the first world. But times have changed.

It used to be that life expectancy averaged to 90 years in many countries-including the space colonies – this in no small part to the application of nanomachines to the field of medicine. Though many disliked the notion at first, it eventually caught on and soon enough virtually every injury or illness could be healed – if you could afford it.

The advancements in AI and robotics propelled industrialization to new heights, making it possible for a handful of technicians to do the work of a hundred – enabling those who still relied on manpower to devalue it even further. No AI with an intelligence quotient greater than that of small mammals was officially created, some say that we never quite learned enough about cognitive development to get there, while others say this was out of fear.

The arts were one of the few areas where the rudimentary brains of the AI workforce couldn't replace human talent, and in this dilettante society many turned to their 'artistic calling' to make ends meet. Transhumanist themes were common, and catered to the interests of the rich and influential, who consumed them voraciously.

The UEF created their own coin as part of their separation from the SSA – who did the same – and the UEF territory still uses their Universal Reserve Notes (or simply 'Notes', though some hardliners like to call them 'Universals') to this day in addition to whichever remains of local currency still survive.

The SSA's preferred medium of exchange these days is the Nobel, which is split into units measured in Centinobels and Decinobels. Hiryu chose to eschew either coinage entirely, and within its borders one primarily deals with the Kurogane, Hagane and Shirogane.

As part of the ongoing globalization process, English was adopted as a secondary Language worldwide and across the colonies, immigration laws in most countries recessed in strictness to fluent speakers. But this was far from benign as it forced the lower classes to compete with each other, while the vacant spots they left in their homeland was taken by AIs.

Space represented the future for many, and indeed, for many years launching for the Colonies was much like sailing for America in past centuries to the eyes of many. The colonies themselves would be happy to oblige these delusions, for they always saw themselves as more humanitarian than their counterparts, keeping as workforce those they favored and relegating the rest to their various mining colonies and a lonely future as part of a skeleton crew.

But hope and ambition were not the sole reason people wanted to go into space; Mother Earth was growing old and its children continued to make a mess of the house. Projects Sonne, Mond and Sterne were as much about saving the Earth from ecological collapse as they were about weaponizing Gygravagnite – it is too bad the Outsiders had to plunge humanity into warring once more.

Do not be fooled into thinking that the world was peaceful before then, though, certainly not everyone saw eye to eye with the UEF's policies and many were the forms these tensions took: From the countries that isolated themselves to those that joined but continued their bitter feuds with its neighbors – all kept out of the eyes of the mainstream media and the privileged populace's everyday lives.

In the end, perhaps it would be an accurate observation to say that the more things changed... the more they remained the same.

### Too Much Information

The last few pages abridge nearly a hundred years' worth of information, and the rest of this chapter is going to continue doing so –though it should be more relevant to actually playing the game than a pile of backstory. This information is presented in such a fashion for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, because despite conveying some rather pessimistic views of humanity, GGG is not going to explore them in depth. Such a thing is beyond the scope of this humble game and you would do much better to delve in them using another roleplaying game altogether – all these fascinating advances in various fields of science are presented as plot devices at best and handwaving at worst so that you may focus on the characters without them getting in the way.

The other reason we keep things as simple as possible is that, the more detailed we get, the less room you have to make up your own material and the less that you can change without having to heavily alter the rest of the framework. If there is an aspect of the setting that you hesitate to use or want to replace with a totally awesomer idea you had on your own, please do it, it will definitely be more fun for you that way.

Considering that there are no premade answers presented as to the truth of what is going on behind the scenes of the world, a GM will have to make up some if they are thinking of shedding some light on said mysteries.

Of course, you could just drop said plot altogether and just use it as an excuse to have hot giant robot on giant robot action, which is perfectly fine too.



## Sonne, Mond and Sterne

One of the greatest mysteries of the Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Centuries is what actually happened to the heads of the Project meant to reap the rewards of Gygravagnite, of the reasons behind their disappearance, of what they left behind, what they took with themselves, and of the destinies they met.

Investigations both public and private point in several directions, the most popular theory being of a defection to the Space Colonies, some speculate that they are behind the Guerillas and their superior technology, yet others like to believe they are the creators of the Outsiders themselves.

The truth may never be known, but one thing is for certain: Their individual projects all proved successful and that can be seen everywhere today, from everyday appliances to the world's most impressive battle machine: the Gears.

Originally an acronym for 'General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robot,' it took less than a year for the acronym to supplant the real name. This general-use weapon has defeated the ancient adage that 'all-purpose serves no purpose' in military design.

Designers know that this is a lie, since there is such a depth of variety in Gear models and such vast differences that it is basically cheating to count them all as a single type of machine, much like pretending that a stealth bomber and wheeled artillery are the very same thing.

However, Gears do have a stunning amount of similarities between themselves, despite their variation, unlike most other armoured vehicles of ages past. Gears tend to be obviously humanoid in nature, and can function just fine with only one driver at the helm, given the name of 'Actor' or 'Actress' to differentiate them from the controllers of other mechanized weapons, and the process of controlling them known as 'Enacting'.

The main innovation that Gears brought with them was the Psychic AI Control or 'PsAICon' system, an interface built into the Gear's cockpit that reads the electric signature of the controller's neurons. An on-board AI then encrypts, processes and interprets the signals of what the user intended for the Gear to perform, and allows the various other mechanisms inside to handle said actions.

The head section of the Gear usually acts as a middleman between these systems and the environment, usually packing most sensory equipment as well, as it was found that made it considerably easier for Actors if the Gear mimicked the functions of the human body as much as possible.

Gears also implement a variety of 3G-based technology. Every Gear has a system of balancers that, together with an alloy that allows for limited magnetic levitation capacity, handles all stress to the limbs in the form of shock absorption – enabling giant machines to move at speeds that a land bound machine could rarely match in the past.

Several miniature Gygravagnite reactors are placed alongside the joints instead of having of a single, greater engine, allowing for complex combinations of movements that automatically distribute all the energy a limb could need, and producing bursts of energy that compensate in the case of a missing leg – covering for the most glaring weakness in giant bipeds.

Gears can not only reproduce every single movement that the human body is capable of, but also can move in ways beyond the elasticity of any human that has ever existed, in addition to quite simply being able to mount a inestimable variety of equipment on their bodies.

Finally, the PsAICon's reliance on computers means that they can be easily customized and reprogrammed to be 'taught' a variety of maneuvers as the Actor requires, and all the Actor has to do is train themselves to transmit the proper thought patterns to activate said techniques, making Gears incredibly versatile.

What these advances mean when looking at the big picture is that now every single soldier on a battlefield could perform to the full extent of their abilities without being limited by their physical bodies, being as resilient or speedy as necessary.

And since Gears could adapt to virtually any kind of situation on the fly without having any 'natural predator' on the battlefield besides other Gears, they became the standard by which all future weapons would be judged.

This is not to say Gears are perfect weapons. That claim is far from the truth. Gears are more complex to control than other vehicles of warfare of the past, with the difficulty of training new Actors making it so that no faction ever has more than a few platoon's worth.

Gears also require more resources to both produce and maintain than any other weapon to date. However, as the number of Gears outnumbers that of Actors, factions can get away with switching out a damaged one for one they have in 'stock' keeping their Actors on the battlefield.

Due to the limited number of Actors and costly maintenance of Gears, squadrons of Board vehicles controlled by a human overseer are the mainstay weapon of choice for practical purposes in the UEF's arsenal. What Gears excel at is at maximizing the potential and survivability of human soldiers, and since no automated drone from the UEF has -so far- managed to match human talent Gears will remain the undisputed kings of human warfare.

Not even the sheer numbers of automated Boards abusing the vastness of the old UEF armies match the performance of a well-oiled GAF platoon.

Despite all these advantages, work still continues on Gears by every faction in the Earth Sphere to ensure superiority over their foes, straying far enough from the baseline to further bring into question the use of an unifying name for them all, from strange Gears that have non-humanoid forms they can transform into, to ones that may possibly have a strange living organism filling that Gear armor.

## General Equipment

Though counting all the applications of Element G to warfare would take nothing short of an eternity, a list of the most common implementations of its advances in the form of weaponry is much more down to earth.

Following are some of the most common armaments seen in battlefields worldwide - and beyond, these weapons are common to a great variety of Gears due to their many advantages over others.

### Compact Quarrel Controls

Issued to virtually every Gear is the so-called CQC system, apparently a joke placeholder name that carried all the way through its development cycle, Compact Quarrel Controls are a very simple but effective concept.

The Gear's hands are made as human-like as possible and the PsAICon is programmed to be responsive to even unconscious reflexive thought for them. This would prove to be a terrible idea in any other area of the body - the human form is simply too different from most Gears' - but, when applied correctly, it allows anyone with a knowledge of hand to hand combat to effectively make use of that expertise.

Comboing with the CQC system is the variety of giant cold weapons devised as a cost-efficient last resort weapon, for those times when there's no other reasonable option.

### Firearms

Even in this day and age of previously unthinkable technology, classic armaments still have their use, even if they require to be used in truly preposterous amounts to have the same efficiency as superior Beam Weapons.

While Gear-scale Cannons are just as good as one can imagine, ranging from 120mm railguns to the monstrous 1200mm trans-horizontal cannons, the lower tier fully-automatic, mounted 36mm vulcans fill a somewhat more niche role as weapons designed to lay covering fire and exploit holes in enemy defenses rather than pure implements of destruction.

When compared to most other Gear-class weapons, firearms are cheap to produce and easy to upkeep, making them more of an afterthought to ensure a Gear always has an all-range weapon than anything else. Despite this, they are not to be underestimated; Many skirmishes have been decided not by who had the flashiest weaponry but by who was able to wear down their enemy the best, and firearms excel at that.

## Beam Weaponry

Beam weapons are miniaturized versions of the first degeneracy particle beam cannons. With a simple pull of a trigger, a number of unstable, contained Gygs crystals expel their energy in a straight, linear path of pure destruction. This is mostly seen in the common-use Beam Rifles fielded by most Gears across North America, but multiple variations have been developed, from larger, more punitive cannons to the so called "Beam Saber".

A beam saber discharges a minuscule amount of constant, highly focused energy making use of a minimal amount of Type Y around the edges to contain it from dispersing too much. Obtaining maximum efficiency at minimum cost, the effective range of the weapon is its only real limiting factor.

A key advantage of the Beam Saber over other particle beam based weaponry is that the 'blade' can easily bypass the defensive measures meant to shield Gears from other beam weapons. At the same time, the use of Type Y to help form the blade means that a skilled user can use his own beam saber to block another.

In close combat, nothing has quite the same combination of speed and sheer power of an energy blade - just make sure the enemy goes down with that first attack, getting a second one in against a prepared foe is understandably difficult.

### Missiles

Precision-Guided Munitions suffer from many of the same flaws that plague firearms, and have several extra of their own, such as reliance on guidance systems that can be interrupted and poor performance at medium to short ranges. Even then, the fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as a wrong weapon, only wrong defensive systems, and high-yield explosives are so effective when they do work that they simply cannot be ignored.

The most common are the small kind, designed to be launched in quantity to overwhelm defenses that would usually stall other kinds of missiles; these are either carried by Gears in hand-held portable "Pods" designed to be fired all at once and then discarded or come installed into the Gear, in truly exorbitant quantities that make their repeated use a possibility.

Missiles are unique in that they can be loaded with special munitions, losing destructive power for a tactical advantage by interfering with enemy effectiveness.



## Gygravagnite Type-G

The key to the guerrilla's more advanced equipment and their (relative) success over their foes lies in their discovery of the fourth refinement of Gygravagnite. Achieved by a process that is said to have only been successfully finished once and is clouded in the most absolute secrecy, this gaseous state of Element G is only visible when in obscenely large quantities.

Resembling bright green dust, Type-G is unfathomably hazardous; its particles possessing extremely violent repulsive forces, tearing apart any material that comes into contact with it.

The only Type-G reactor in current existence is assigned to the Guerilla's Wagner, the first flying battleship. A multitude of smaller and imperfect Type-G devices produced are being regularly put to military use by the Hiryu.

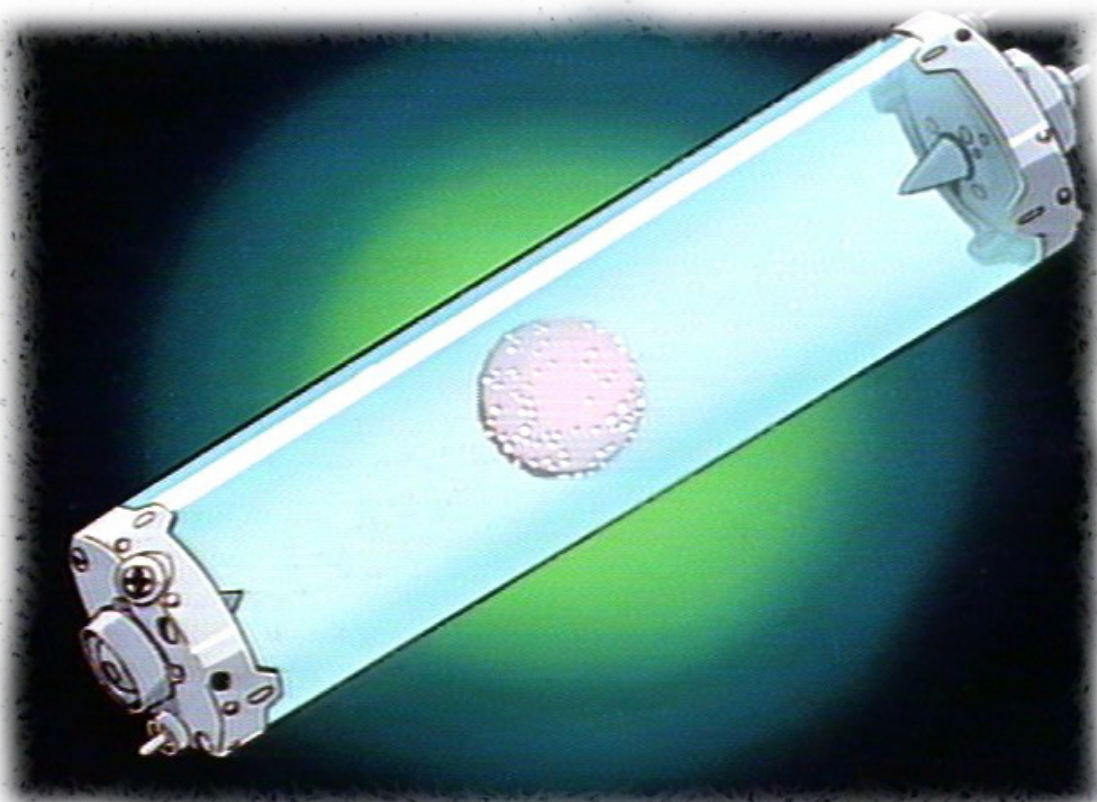
The Wagner uses Type-G for its 'Anti-Gravity' system, manipulating Type-G particles magnetically to keep them contained within Buoyancy Pods. These Pods are milk carton-sized and contain minimal amounts of Type-G, but are present in great quantity, so that if any of them were to be compromised the Gear (and its vicinity) wouldn't annihilate 'too much' of the surrounding area.

Type G naturally repels its environment and particularly itself very strongly, meaning that even at atmospheric pressures it has a density slightly off of the vacuum of space and the Wagner's sizeable amount of Type-G allows for the lifting of approx 27000 tons.

The research team at the Hiryu developed a method to make an even stronger network of Buoyancy Pods by altering the basic composition of Type-G further - some speculate this was done with the exotic materials that are part of an Outsider's makeup - creating a miniaturized system with apparently negative weight, lowering the effective weight of Gears significantly due to buoyancy, and enabling them to perform insane feats of acrobatics and sustained flight. Enough pods can make escaping the Earth's gravity viable with even simple jet engines, and many believe the Wagner is capable of doing so.

The second known use of this technology is the "Gravagne Field." It consists of a limited supply of Type-G kept contained by a strong magnetic field in the form of a 'barrier' around a Gear, annihilating -or at least drastically weakening- anything that tries to break past it. The energy required to keep the barrier intact even just a few meters from the Gear's own frame uses up truly ludicrous amounts, generally draining the majority of a Gear's energy in as little as a minute of sustained activation. Furthermore, it requires conscious thought to control it, distracting the user from reprisal or movement altogether. This makes an offensive use of the field a dubious tactic at best, but still a wonderful defensive implement to have when desperately needed.

The only proverbial chink in the Gravagne Field's armor is that another forcefield of similar characteristics will simply impart any force behind it onto the hull as the fields do not shred each other. Such an event would likely overload both Gravagne generators if they continued to supply magnetic field to that area, forcing an emergency shutdown. Since only the Hiryu currently has access to this technology, this should not pose a problem. For now.



# The Soaring Dragon Fortress

## Geography

An alliance. A nation. A symbol of humanity's ability to stand against even impossible odds. Hiryu is all of these things and more. Controlling three of the FWA's islands, Hiryu's main island is by far its best known to the population at large. Its famous dragon-shaped fortress faces eastward on the densely populated island; the 339 square kilometers holding a city of over three million and growing. In the last decade, Hiryu's status as being radiation-free - and more importantly, free in other ways that most of the world can no longer claim - has made it the center of activity and hope for Oceania and the rest of the world.

Hiryu Island is more than just a booming population center, though. It's also the front line in the war against the Outsiders. The island was due to be abandoned by the UEF after repeated incursions made it clear that the Outsiders were not going to honor its designation as the safe area 'Zone 83'.

Plans were made to relocate the citizens of Hiryu Island -the Hiryujin- to various other locations, splitting them up to safe zones in North America and Europe, but the UEF's plans went awry when the citizens refused to cooperate.

Guerrillas turned public opinion against the UEF, stirring up feelings of patriotism and pride in the Hiryujin. Starting as a simple resistance against the UEF's harsh resettlement plans, the rebel forces grew in strength and importance. After managing to force a UEF team back by sheer hard work and guts in a very publicly televised scuffle, the house of cards that was the UEF's authority over Hiryu fell like dominoes. It was checkmate for the relocation plans. The UEF was forced to retreat from the island and has never managed to gain a foothold there again.

The Soaring Dragon Fortress is the most well-known landmark of Hiryu, and is what almost anyone from outside will think of first when they think of the islands. Carved into the top of Mount Barou, the Fortress was built over the former local military headquarters of the UEF, though it's unlikely they'd recognize it at this point.

Mount Barou itself holds a prominent place in the young mythology and geography of the island. It reaches a kilometer and a half into the sky, and is one of the few places on the island not covered in industrialization. Civilian structures are not allowed within the base perimeter, with the single exception of the Barou Shrine. Built at the base of the mountain, the Barou Shrine is the largest temple on the island, from which the Priestess is said to communicate with the spirit of the island directly.

The remainder of the main island is heavily urbanized. There are fewer tall buildings than in many other cities, with a large amount of underground construction. Most large buildings house shelters for public use, in case of an attack or stropic weather, something not uncommon during the rainy season.

The other two islands under Hiryu's control -Mitsurugi and Kasshin- are smaller and mostly unpopulated, serving as battlegrounds and the front line of defense against invasion. They serve essential roles in defending the lives of the millions that depend on Hiryu's success, and the loss of either would be crippling. Both islands are all but devoid of permanent human presence, being used solely as battlegrounds for the island's Gear force.

Mitsurugi Island, the farthest from Hiryu at 27 kilometers to the east, and serves as a forward base. Hidden deep within its surface, under a kilometer of volcanic rock, an underground facility was built to store vast amounts of supplies, allowing for rapid repair and restock of friendly forces via AI suppliers. Hidden deployment points and emergency bulkheads make it very difficult, if not impossible, for an enemy to stop the drones or gain entry to the base proper.

Mitsurugi Base itself is a wonder of technology, almost entirely managed by AI with a mere token skeleton crew of humans as oversight in case of emergency. A kilometer of rock augmented with armor plating would allow the base to survive at least a limited nuclear or orbital bombardment, though the more delicate sensors located on the island, able to detect Outsiders from nearly a hundred kilometres away, would likely be blinded until repairs could be made.

In addition to its supplies for Gears, Mitsurugi base carries a large amount of supplies intended for its human crew. In the event that a first encounter on Mitsurugi is lost, the standard operating procedure for the base is for the facility to turn off its power to escape enemy detection until the destruction of the enemy by the remaining Self Defense Forces is confirmed. The base maintains enough supplies on base to last through a long siege, with at least a month of food and water ready at any time.

Closer to the Hiryu mainland is Kasshin island. Unlike Mitsurugi base, there isn't even a token human presence on Kasshin. The entire island is just rocks and automated defensive structures, carefully designed not so much as something to destroy an Outsider but to distract it. A hundred separate mobile beacons are deployed around the island to send out waves of distracting energy in every spectrum the Outsiders have been attracted to in the past and a few extras just in case they help.

These pulsating waves of energy distract and confuse any Outsiders that pass anywhere near the island. The randomized pattern of waves is something like having several spotlights shining in your face at once, blinding and confusing for Outsiders.

Most Outsiders are drawn to the island, and the short recharge time of the beacons means that the dazzling barrage can be kept up indefinitely. This barrage is intended to hold the Outsiders' attention long enough for a final defense line on the coasts of Hiryu to form.



## Rumors

\* The shrine on Mount Barou is more important than it seems. The island's defenders are trained to prioritize defending it over the rest of the city. Whatever the spirit of the island really is - a tame Outsider, a superweapon Gear, one of the Cryptids - it's the entire reason Hiryu exists today.

\* Mitsurugi base is just one of many facilities located in nearby islands, all connected by an underwater network with the Soaring Dragon Fortress at its center, including a direct pathway from Mitsurugi base to below the orbital elevator.

\* The rest of the Far West Archipelago isn't under UEF control either, they just refuse to communicate back to Hiryu for whatever reason. Men and women sent to investigate have universally failed to return. Some believe the islands are under direct Outsider control and that any inhabitants there are used to produce their Botakuri attendants, others think that the people there have discarded all of their Element G based technology and have been enjoying a peaceful lifestyle ever since the UEF turned tail.

While in emergencies Gears can be deployed to Kasshin Island, the island was once a Gygravnite mine, and the radiation persists strongly enough that it's dangerous to put people on the ground at all except to repair the mobile beacons.

The main island of Hiryu is home to a fair variety of imported flora and fauna, with Mount Barou as the only undeveloped part of the island. Mount Barou hosts the only real native life there, mostly lichen with some hardy, small shrubs and grass. Some forms of insects and other small animals have taken residence there, but they are mostly things humans brought with them without knowing. Rats and rabbits have done well for themselves, though they seem oddly intelligent and hard to get rid of.

Mitsurugi and Kasshin are home to little more than rocks and lichen. The radiation and waves of energy pouring over Kasshin make it very hard for life to get a foothold on the island. Anything living on Mitsurugi must quickly adapt to an environment full of explosions. The sea, at least, remains healthy and alive, with extensive coral reefs and fish.



## Culture

Hiryu has a history of democratically elected leaders, though during the UEF's reign over the island, free elections were suspended 'for the duration of the current crisis.' After the rebellion, there was fear that one charismatic leader or another would make himself into a dictator, but the fears appear to have been for naught, as the democratic process was reinstated almost immediately after the UEF was removed and Hiryu regained its self-rule.

Despite the support of its people, though, the free government of Hiryu seems to have only limited power in many ways. The President and Hiryu's Diet answer to powerful outside interests, and the reality of the situation is that Hiryu would not remain standing today without this aid from outside.

Support for the resistance comes in the form of money, technology, and manpower. The true origins of the source of this support are unknown (though the popular belief is that the Chinese mafia is the main benefactor of the island). The true agenda of these outside supporters is also unknown, though the number of reasons someone might want to strike a blow against the UEF or the Outsiders is nearly infinite.

The Dragon City of Hiryu is almost a model of self-sufficiency. Almost every household has at least some hand in the production of food; a necessity given the small growing area available to the island and the difficulty of bringing in produce.

Victory gardens can be found almost anywhere one looks, ranging from a few vegetables in windowsill planters to the extensive rooftop gardens that top nearly every building. A thriving fishing industry exists along the island's coasts, and most residents eat fish multiple times every week.

Because of UEF interference, all of Hiryu's trading with the outside is illegal by default. The island requires outside goods, especially finished or manufactured products, to satisfy demand and keep the war effort moving. However, as everything must be done through smuggling and the black market, the price of goods from the outside is extremely expensive.

The local currencies of Hiryu are nearly worthless on the world market, and the island is still haunted by the ghosts of past natural disasters and the current war looming overhead. It's no surprise, then, that Hiryu culture has developed into one of unity and perseverance in the face of danger.

Hiryu is a fusion of several cultures that were forced to band together to survive against the harsh world, each desperately clinging to their own identities in an age when globalization was erasing borders and cultural uniqueness. As the population center of the Far West Archipelago and a statement of humanity's resolve to fight against tyranny and invasion, Hiryu emphasizes how wildly different traits and people can learn to cooperate for the sake of the greater good. The merging of cultures has led to unique architecture and food, driven as much by necessities and scarcity as by anything else.

There is little crime on the island, with official reports putting the total crime rate per capita at just above 25 for every 1000 inhabitants, with almost no violent crimes to speak of. However, it's estimated the real crime rate is much higher, perhaps twice that number or more, and that most crimes simply aren't reported.

The two predominant ethnicities in Hiryu are Japanese and Oceanic. Despite the names, the Japanese are a minority on the island – they arrived on the island first, and consequently were the first to name it and its features. The Australians and Polynesians likely would have gotten that privilege, except the Japanese received UN support that the others did not, something some are still bitter about.

The Japanese make up slightly less than thirty percent of the population, while other Pacific Islanders make up a significantly larger part at just over forty percent. The remainder of the island's population is mostly of mixed origin, with the percentage expected to rise in the coming years. There are few Caucasians or Africans in the population, as travel is heavily restricted (and illegal) and there simply weren't many on the island before the disaster that was the Outsider invasion.

Despite all their troubles, the day to day life of the typical Hiryujin is different - and better – from that of civilians in the UEF's Safe Zones and much more like what life was like pre-Outsider contact. The Hiryujin are proud to be able to maintain that lifestyle despite shortages, war, and the constant threat of annihilation by aliens or the UEF, who most see as being little more than tools of the Outsiders.

Hiryu has all the necessities of civilian life. The Hiryujin study to become professionals, wake up every morning to go to work, get married and have children, and retire when they become too old to continue working. When there is danger they orderly head for the shelters; each Hiryujin is brought up to know that if they were to panic, let alone riot or loot, it would only be for everyone's long-term detriment. The Hiryujin place the good of the whole before the good of the individual.

## Religion

Over the last half-century, the religious practices of the Hiryujin blended and converged into one common ethos unique to the island, and appropriately known both on and off the island simply as the "Hiryu Religion". The religion has both monotheistic and animistic qualities owing to its parent religions, and has ancestor-worship and a strong matriarchal tradition.

The focus of the religion is on two primary tenets - the strengthening of one's body, mind, and spirit; and the belief that all things have a spiritual embodiment. Body, mind, and spirit are empowered by the practice of martial arts, typically starting at a very early age. Monks serve as the primary teachers for the various martial arts, and there really is a variety to choose from- there isn't a bias towards one type of martial art or another. Wrestling, kendo, archery, mixed martial arts, and even sumo.

Many never take up martial arts or abandon it early, seeing in them a way to keep kids busy and maybe even keep them in shape, but ultimately little more than that.

## Rumors

\* The Chinese Mafia isn't the only source of backing that Hiryu island has. While it's obvious that other scattered resistance groups occasionally pass along things of interest, rare and more exotic materials are surprisingly common, to say nothing of the ubiquitous Gygravagnite Type-G. These materials are easily manufactured in space. That the UEF has also been having problems keeping satellite surveillance on the island is quite common knowledge...

\* The island can't possibly support its massive population with its restricted imports and small farming area. There are secret farms buried deep underground that produce large amounts of basic proteins, which are formed into a lot of the food people eat. The protein ends up, thanks to processing techniques, indistinguishable from meat or some types of vegetable. What it starts out as, though, is something unnatural... though perhaps not entirely unhuman.

\* The president and Diet are merely figureheads for the real rulers of the island, a small group of Outsiders who have rebelled from the main group of aliens and sided with humanity, as the source of their advanced knowledge and technology.

Even so, the majority of the island acknowledges the wisdom of the Priestesses and Monks, and at least pay lip service and occasionally make token offerings at the temples during holy days.

The belief that all things have a spirit means that the followers of the Hiryu Religion generally try to keep on good terms with these spirits. Those spirits that think well of them - generally those of one's ancestors - are believed to remain vigilant and watch over them. Many of the more traditional and conservative households have a small shrine dedicated to the family's ancestors.

One can talk to the spirits with simple prayers, though for the most part there are no real totems involved, and shrines only serve as gathering places and a place to pray to ancestors. The island, with its limited space, simply cannot afford to bury the dead. Cremation is the most common funeral rite on the island, though some families prefer burial at sea.

The only memorial on the island is to those that have fallen in the war against the Outsiders, a massive concrete memorial that has names added to it once a year in a public ceremony serving as a time to remember and celebrate those who have given their lives in the service of freedom.

The general belief is that the spirits reply to prayers through visions seen in dreams and meditation, and more indirectly through acts of good fortune. It's common for most residents to blame good or bad luck on the spirits, and there's a strong belief in dream interpretation and prediction. Many children keep dream journals - and a few keep them all the way into adulthood.



The spiritual leaders in Hiryu are Priestesses, exclusively women and the only ones who can communicate directly to the spirit of the World - which is something like God itself in the religion, all powerful and the source of all life. Priestesses choose their successors themselves, teaching them the most central and secret mysteries of the religion over many years until they are ready to take up the mantle of Priestess themselves.

Priestesses act as counsellors and mediators in their communities, which respect their insight and acuity. Their arbitration takes the place of what would end up going to court in many other nations, most willing to abide by their (generally quite fair) decisions.

The male Monks have a less celebrated but no less important role, taking care of the temples, working their farms and gardens to feed those who come in need of food and shelter and teaching martial arts, free of charge. The modest temple shrines get by mostly on donations and offerings made throughout the year.



### Rumors

\* There's more to the spirits than meets the eye. There are coincidences and odd events that defy probability. Though no study has been done on it officially, it's clear that there's something unusual, perhaps supernatural, going on.

\* Many elementary school teachers have their students write down their dreams as a regular assignment in class. While some might dismiss this as a simple way to get students writing something interesting to them, these assignments are handed over to government analysts for unknown purposes.

\* A few years ago it was word in certain temples that a single, deranged man was inhabiting Mt Barou, hidden even from the military. The man said he could hear the voice of a beast crying at the heart of the world, and that he has left civilization to dedicate himself to recording its mad yelps and moans.

### Military

What is now the Hiryu Self Defense Force was formerly the Zone 83 UEF Peacekeeping Force, and as such continues to hold similar structures and ranks in its armed forces, though owing to its small numbers, they have a unified force instead of a separate army, air force, and navy.

Hiryu's cadets are trained to be as proficient in the use of firearms and vehicles as any army in the world, but they are also all trained to be experts at the art of swordsmanship, a style developed by one of the island's greatest aces, a combination of the 'iai' and 'kendo' martial arts that seeks to cultivate the user's mind and spirit as well as to hone their skills at swordplay.

The Gears designed on Hiryu use a special type of motion-controls that make them move almost like living things. This makes them extremely easy for new Actors to pick up, but means that the more physically fit an Actor is, the better the machines perform in combat. That this makes the machines more efficient in close combat is no accident - every shot that their Gears fires costs Hiryu, and the more conservative they are, using close quarters combat and similar tactics, the longer they can hold out with their limited resources.

The ultimate source of all of Hiryu's advanced technology is, of course, the anonymous backers that have been supporting them from afar from somewhere in the larger continents. Through black markets and dangerous smuggling operations using interdicted waters, they have obtained plenty of industrial support from outside, providing the raw materials the local industries need to thrive.

With the island exporting very little, the outside backers are investing in the future of humanity, trusting in the resistance forces.

Also strengthened with the help of the rebellion and their secret investors, the former GAF local military headquarters of Zone 83 was transformed into the Soaring Dragon Fortress, complete with a giant dragon head carved into Mt Barou base itself, standing a kilometer and a half above ground level. There, at the highest point of the great mountain, is the automated Direct-fire Intercepting Orbit-range System, 'Kuzuryusen.'

Consisting of nine clusters of Type-R crystals conducting their energy into a central mega-particle cannon with over fifty kilotons of destructive power, Kuzuryusen has only been fired once to date, a test shot against a UEF spy satellite in low orbit. The tremendous power of the cannon not only vaporized the satellite but continued to clear a hole in Earth's orbital debris field, the shock sending dozens of other satellites into unstable orbits and leading to a long night of shooting stars.

Multiple capacitors and energy regulation systems have been placed for use in emergency situations, should Hiryu ever see the need to defend itself with what is probably overkill - just one tenth of the Kuzuryusen's destructive power is destructive enough to take out multiple city blocks in one shot.

Unfortunately, in truth, Kuzuryusen is more of an extremely expensive deterrent to human attackers and can serve little purpose offensively in the war against the Outsiders. Use of the cannon on a firing trajectory that intersects the Earth would cause nuclear-level devastation, and its nature as a pure Gygravagnite weapon means that heavy particles and fallout would poison the land and sea almost irreparably for all future use. Currently, use of the Kuzuryusen cannon requires direct authorization from the President himself, with his office assuming all responsibility for any damage it causes.

The main defense force of Soaring Dragon Fortress beyond its Anti-Outsider Squad is comprised of a plethora of homegrown HMR-000 'Karakuri' model Gears. Their main advantage over other Gears is that they are equipped with the Marionette System, an advanced Board system devised by Hiryu R&D, and may thus be controlled remotely by computer commands. During most operations, these commands are very general and rely on AI flexibly interpreting orders. In a pinch, the Gears can be given more specific commands, or even controlled directly as if one were in the Gear's very Core, when the situation calls for it. Unfortunately, the Marionette System relies on vulnerable control stations that they cannot stray too far from - the densely complex command system and limited range of the Karakuri's onboard communications equipment restricts its actions to within a few km of its central control station, which is none other than the Dragon Fortress itself.

Aside from the Karakuri Gears, the Soaring Dragon Fortress is of course home to various one-off models and prototypes built using experimental weapons and armor, with the implementation of Gravagne Forcefields and Gear-sized Anti-Gravity systems being a local specialty. Many are simply too expensive, too specialized, or just too difficult to maintain for entering mass production. These Gears are given to skilled Actors who can bring out the best in the designs, though some are simply too difficult for any Actor to manage, producing bone-breaking G forces or feedback in the motion tracking systems that leads to Actors becoming mentally unstable.

## The Enemy

The Hiryu Self Defense Force is the only armed force in the world that faces off against humanity's greatest foe on a regular basis. The Outsiders were at first believed to be invincible, with the majority of conventional weapons having no effect on them at all (aside from possibly enraging them, but making the invincible alien monster angry at you is typically not something a soldier wants to do). The Gears piloted by the brave rebellion forces have proven that Outsiders can be killed, or at least forced to retreat.

Outsiders are creatures of astounding diverse forms and sizes, and most scientists think that there are a large number of Outsider species, though others think it's equally possible that the Outsiders are all members of one species - the differences might be some sort of incredible racial diversity, deliberate alteration of genomes, or some sort of augmentation.

Possibly all three. Since all Outsiders to date have been unique and they are very difficult to study, proving any theory has proven quite difficult.

The forms Outsiders have taken generally resemble a crystal or manufactured object more than any sort of living creature, but the rare humanoid or animalistic forms also exist, always keeping their metallic or otherwise composite-like texture. Even the size of Outsiders has varied widely, from 10 meters to over a hundred. There seems to be no pattern or reason behind the forms they take, and if there is an underlying logic behind it all, it's a logic that is as alien and unknowable as they are.

Outsiders are made of a bizarre and exotic material known, quite appropriately, as Exotic Matter. The majority of their bodies, by volume, is made of this material, which has bizarre properties. It seems to defy Newton's laws - though in reality they still follow them, just perhaps not as expected given the sign change: They have negative mass. Ten forms of Exotic Matter have been identified so far, though it is possible that further study will uncover more.

The study of Exotic Matter is hampered by a nullification effect that occurs when it collides with normal matter. Unlike antimatter annihilation, nullification doesn't cause a large release of energy, though because of the conservation of momentum, it generates a kind of reactionless drive, and the Outsiders are believed to function primarily by using this effect as a kind of energy source - the cleanest energy source possible, with no byproducts at all except the kinetic energy it produces.

After the death of an Outsider, the nullification of its Exotic Matter accelerates. After going silent, an Outsider will entirely vanish into nothingness within a maximum of 404 hours. Attempts to separate Outsider normal matter components from its Exotic Matter for study have all met with failure. Doing so almost inevitably exponentially hastens the nullification decomposition of the Outsider, leading to shockwaves of free kinetic energy that can have dangerous destructive power.

## Rumors

\* At least one of the more troublesome prototypes that's locked away in Soaring Dragon Fortress is a more dangerous piece of work than it seems. It's an Outsider, captured, lobotomized, and armored to hide its true nature.

\* The Marionette System is based on uploaded human minds. The process was abandoned after it was found that the brain could only be scanned destructively, always resulting in the death of the person being scanned, but the fruits of that experiment continue to be borne out as the source material is copied again and again and again from the digital source code. The Karakuri Gears don't go out of control if they go beyond the range of their control station - they go insane.

\* The Kuzuryusen cannon is being readied for another shot. The coordinates are seemingly empty space slightly above the orbital plane of the solar system. Not even meteorites seem to be there, but a lot of energy and manpower is being diverted to this operation.



What studies have been able to prove is that Outsiders lack identifiable internal organs of any sort, and that they do not have a metabolism as humanity understands it. The inside of their bodies seem to be composed almost entirely of a highly corrosive non-newtonian fluid that oozes out of them when wounded. It is believed that this liquid, this 'Outsider Ooze' is some sort of catalyst or mediator for the nullification effect of their Exotic Matter-based biology.

Study of this Ooze has been very difficult to make. It solidifies into a sort of rubber on contact with air, and nullifies entirely within 3 minutes of leaving the body of the Outsider. It's believed that the Ooze's properties allow it to transmit kinetic energy as a kind of complex conductor, which would make it almost invaluable if it could be synthesized. The only thing that is certain about its composition is that it contains at least some amount of Gygravagnite - the radiation signature is obvious.

Outsiders display abilities that vary wildly. Some have dangerous natural weapons that mirror those of the GAF Gears or more likely, the GAF's designs are based on that of their Outsider masters. Others show built-in technology or organs that resemble Element G devices, from eye beams to horns that behave just like homing missiles. That these things evolved naturally is almost impossible to believe, lending credence to the theories that the Outsiders were built or grown as weapons.

The most obvious behavioral trait of Outsiders is that they make absolutely no attempt to communicate with humans. It's unknown if the ones that come out are unable or simply unwilling to communicate - if they're actually sentient beings or not is something that is still being debated. Regardless, they show no more concern for humans than humans would for a swarm of bothersome bugs. And like bugs, the only thing they can do to be noticed is to sting - and the only reply they get is death.

### Rumors

\*The Outsiders are even more bizarre than that might first appear. The Exotic Matter they're made of isn't something that should be able to exist in this universe. They are either from some dark corner of space where the laws of physics are different or perhaps from somewhere much farther away indeed.

\*The Outsider mothership at Easter II is impervious to any and all known manmade implements of destruction. The Hiryu is not just biding time and trying to secure its position, it is trying its best to figure out how to actually strike back at an enemy that probably could annihilate them if they tried hard enough.

\*Exotic Matter isn't only found in Outsiders. Detailed medical scans and exploratory surgery have found it in the bodies of UEF spies and traitors. It's believed that they are using the Exotic Matter as some sort of mind control agent - the alternative theory, that people have been replaced by clones or possessed by some sort of ghost-like Outsider - is almost too frightening to seriously consider.

The second distinguishing quirk is their attraction to Element G. It is believed that the main reason that nearly all Outsiders coming out of their mothership at Neo Easter II head west towards Hiryu and the rest of the FWA is because of the vastly higher concentration of Gygravagnite in both raw and refined forms there as compared to the rest of the world. Thankfully for Hiryu, Element G is also the Outsider's greatest weakness.

Outsiders seem fascinated by sources of Element G. They will pick apart and disassemble a Gear if they have the opportunity, apparently studying it and its components. When finished, they do their best to utterly destroy what they've studied down to the last particle, leaving no trace of it behind. This happens this with every new Gear it encounters, which is one reason so many prototypes end up on the battlefield - every new Gear might buy some time even if things go badly.

Mass produced AI units are deployed in attempt to drown them out in numbers, but this has only met with limited success, as the units are inferior in combat to manned ones, and it has proven to be more efficient to turn out prototypes that drive the enemy back or, preferably, destroy them before the Outsiders can do the same.

The reason the Outsiders are so fascinated with Gygravagnite is a hot topic of debate in Hiryu's news, meetings, and cafe chat, but the undeniable fact that they're attracted to it means that the Hiryujin are unwilling to store any large amounts of Gygravagnite, or machines using it, near the Dragon City. This has led to burying some larger machines with the hope that rock will shield whatever emissions the Outsiders are picking up, though it's unknown how much that helps.

Recently, things have been taking a turn for the worse. The Outsiders have started adapting to humanity's use of the Gears and have been deploying their own brand of giant battle machines that the Hiryu Self Defense Force has taken to calling Botakuris.

These bizarre mechanical contraptions seem to defy science and logic in many aspects of their design and construction, often using technology that is considered to be impossible or simply hideously inefficient. Whatever process goes into their design, it's clearly inhuman in nature. The Botakuris have been used to wear down Hiryu Gears and defensive lines before making a push on their main target, the island itself, and are sometimes deployed with no Outsider commanding them at all, simply sent to harass or attempt to break through lines on their own. Depending on their design, they can be laughably easy to destroy or a nightmare of metal or even flesh.

# The Mobile Battleship Wagner

## Life in the Safe Zones

The last decade and a half has been hard on the population of Earth. As the center of power for the UEF, North America has been hit even harder by the radical changes that have destroyed the old lifestyles people around the globe had enjoyed before the Outsider Subjugation.

North America is host to the first 26 Safe Zones, thanks to the greater GAF presence ensuring a swift military response to threats from within or without.

Life inside a Safe Zone has two sides, ranging from oppressive to unhealthy in the extreme. That shouldn't be surprising, considering that the zones are the condensed population of entire continents in only a few dozen cities. The conditions are more like the 19th century than the 21st.

In the center of each Safe Zone is a Sanctuary District, and unless you're part of the UEF, you're almost certainly living in the surrounding government controlled ghettos. The rich, educated and influential get to enjoy living in the Sanctuary hub, with only cutthroat competitiveness and aggressive censorship and information control as their biggest worries. Outside the Sanctuary Districts it is absolutely abhorrent.

The government annexed and took over large parts of every city, walled them off and packed people inside like sardines. Every house, room, and bed in the ghettos is shared by people who might never actually learn each other's names or even meet face to face. There is no such thing as personal space or privacy.

Weapons are tightly controlled; food and water only come into the districts in force and are rationed by Civil Control, leaving the majority of people malnourished.

The supplies the government sends in aren't enough to feed everyone even if they were distributed well – Those in the Sanctuary get preferential treatment, of course.

Civil Control is the government force in charge of controlling each individual district, made up almost exclusively of civilians that would rather join the victors than continue their lives in misery. The people stuck in the ghettos of the Safe Zones have almost no way to improve their lot in life - other than joining Civil Control or hope they score impossibly well in the various tests that the rudimentary school system holds every year.

The government promises work opportunities and ways for the people to honestly support themselves, but unless you're inside the Sanctuary the only thing available is slave labor in sweatshops. Child labor is not uncommon, and many work upwards of twelve hours a day. When they are paid, most of the money goes to paying taxes to the government and the rest to 'penalties for making mistakes and not meeting impossible quotas. The few scraps they can take home are hoarded in a dream of buying themselves a place in Sanctuary Districts or to escape from the Safe Zones altogether, hoping for some kind of better life.



There are few nods to safety in the ghetto factories, and accidents and deaths occur every day. While AIs have been able to do these jobs for years, they're now used to patrol the Safe Zones, spying on the poor and the elite alike and reporting it to their Civil Control overseers, keeping Big Brother updated in real time. The AIs keep a detailed record on everyone. Even children have everything they do and say scanned for potentially rebellious or unpatriotic phrases.

Only folks in the Sanctuary Districts get to retire. Those outside don't have that luxury, nor do they do anything meaningful with their lives, unless one considers sewing uniforms, packing boxes, or other simple labor to be meaningful.

If people don't disappear off the streets or die of one of the many illnesses that plague the streets (many of them due to malnutrition, others because of the filthy living conditions), they're likely to snap and die in one of the riots that flare up from time to time, each one quickly put down with lethal force. Some Safe Zones are home to 'Patriotic Reinforcement' camps, and what goes on there is spoken of only in whispers by the residents. People come back from these camps changed. Most places where these camps spring up have become much quieter, fear-filled places where people simply obey to avoid horrible punishments.

At first, when the Outsiders first invaded, people were willing to do almost anything to get somewhere safe. Now they're willing to do almost anything to get out. The oppression is so bad that the majority would rather risk their lives outside the Safe Zones instead of dying by inches inside them. A lucky few never had to suffer inside them - they hid during the days of forced relocations and have been avoiding the routine searches ever since then.

Escape attempts are common. Some of the more successful have been coordinated with guerrilla attacks from outside by the Revolutionary Unified Front to draw the military's attention while people get away.

Most residents, though, are broken by the harsh lives they've had to live, and simply exist from day to day, weathering the gray misery and depression of the Safe Zones. The RUF has managed to liberate two Zones from the UEF's oppression already, and their efforts may be the only hope for those that cannot escape the Zones on their own.



## Rumors

\* Those that come back from Patriotic Reinforcement camps usually commit suicide or join either the military or Civil Control not long after their return; others develop much stranger behavioural patterns that are difficult to categorize. With the most extreme case being of one woman who killed and devoured her family on the night of her return before being put down. To this day, not a single one of them has spoken of what actually goes on inside the camps themselves.

\* Every year there is at least one major riot in a different Zone with casualties on both sides. This is attributed to the efforts of the guerrilla - some of the people involved are too well-prepared and armed to be just discontent civilians - but Civil Control reacts all too slowly and even the Boards remain passive until the conflict has escalated too far for it to be undercover sabotage.

\* Though the news won't talk about it, the situation is quite different in the rest of the world. Several countries across the ocean, the ones that have always been resistant to the UEF's power grip, have openly refused to cooperate with their oppressive policies and are openly waging war. They will not permit the UEF to make them comply forcibly to their demands, and frontier UEF forces are simply told that said places are 'under guerrilla control'.

## The Guerilla Effort

The greatest enemy of the UEF on the home front, the RUF is a large underground network, figuratively and occasionally literally. The Revolutionary Unified Front is composed mostly of displaced civilians and discontented UEF officers who have organized against the UEF, with weapons and equipment bought on the black market.

RUF cells work in groups of 20 to 40, operating out of Landships - a bit of a misnomer, as they are suited to function in most kinds of terrain, being capable of sailing the seas and levitating over difficult ground - and focusing for the most part on investigation and sabotage missions. The UEF's forces in most areas outnumber the RUF to such a huge extent that open warfare is simply impossible. However, RUF sources are often found starting riots, organizing escapes from the Zones, and smuggling food and medical supplies to those who need it. Their efforts have saved countless lives.

All RUF cells are in contact with at least one other cell in the continent, though the majority only know of one or two cells outside their own for security reasons. The security of the cells is always a matter of top importance - the UEF would love to crush the resistance, and they have the strength to do it. Only with stealth and guile do the majority of RUF operations succeed.

Lately, there has been a movement to unite the RUF forces across the continent and make a push against the UEF Headquarters in Zone 1, formerly Boston. However, the risk was deemed to be too great. The UEF would put all its forces into play against the Resistance if they made an attack against the UEF Headquarters. Every general wishes for a single decisive battle to end a war, but open conflict is not where the RUF's strengths lie. Such a large battle would simply be a meat grinder and likely lose them the war entirely.

Instead, the RUF has adopted a harassment strategy. They wear down the GAF with sabotage, night attacks, whatever they think will work best to destroy morale and equipment at the least risk. The ultimate goal is to force the UEF to abandon an area, or at least weaken them enough that the RUF can make a decisive strike and eliminate them with force, though that has only been successful on a single occasion.

Most of the RUF consists of untrained civilians, a mix of those who have escaped the Safe Zones and those who had avoided being relocated in the first place. Only now are they finally starting to catch up, learning how to fight through real experience instead of training simulators and boot camps. On average they're far less disciplined than a UEF soldier, but they're fighting for something they believe in. That determination alone is enough to give them a fighting chance.

The RUF would never have lasted this long even with all of their precautions if not for the support of a mysterious third party, the source of all their advanced technology.

Their Gears and Landships are a more than a match for the UEF's designs, though their lack of experienced soldiers to Enact and technicians to perform maintenance means that they're unable to make best use of these advanced weapons.

Most of the RUF knows that they can't really stand up and fight the UEF on an even front - they have few places they can call safe outside their HQ, any large gathering is simply a target, and though popular support is on their side, they can do little more than give people hope and serve as a distraction.

Maybe one day their friends in the Pacific will end the reason for the war, but until then the RUF dedicates itself to supporting the efforts of their lone shining star of hope, the UHDS-01 Wagner.

## Rumors

\* The RUF Gears are more advanced than what the UEF generally fields. Their Gears have refinements to their basic technology that solve many problems that have plagued Gears since their introduction into the modern battlefield. It appears as though they were designed by a genius, someone who understands the technology better than anyone else alive.

\* The Landships are way too spacious for the platoons alone, and some believe they could be used to evacuate civilians from the various Zones - or that this was their original purpose. One of the ideas gaining wind lately is that since the grand majority of the Far West is free of UEF activity it would be ideal for relocating civilians there, and the amphibious capability of Landships further supports this theory.

\* The third party that is supplying the RUF with its advanced gears, supporting Hiryu with supplies, and generally throwing its support against the UEF... well, rumors say that they're the ones who used to run the world from the shadows, and they don't like the way the UEF and the Outsiders have gone and taken everything away from them.

## Ride of the Valkyries

A one-of-a-kind vessel, the Wagner is a 'Superlight-Stealth-OmniEnvironmental-Vessel'. It serves as a mobile base of operations for the RUF's most elite force of Gears, allowing them to be quickly deployed into combat and retrieved at a moment's notice when retreat is called for. Its beyond cutting-edge technology makes it ideal for missions that require a great degree of speed and stealth.

The Wagner is like a paradise to those used to the cramped conditions inside the ghettos and devoid of the paranoid watchful eyes of the Sanctuary Districts. With its ample room, clean fresh air, individual beds, access to (recycled) food three times a day, and lack of UEF forces stomping down on the first sign of discontent it sure beats any of the Zones.

There are dangers, to be sure - you can't live on the biggest target to the GAF without facing some serious risk. Even so, the chance to make a difference, to live free, even in danger... that's far better than just marking time and waiting for death under the wing of the UEF.

The Wagner makes liberal use of automation. For a ship its size, it should require a crew of a hundred or more, but it can be run from the bridge with only a skeleton crew of two or three. Such a small crew does greatly impede its combat performance, though, and so a regular crew of around twenty is better for ship operations. Most of the Wagner's large AI complement is devoted to the task of maintaining stealth for the massive vessel.

How this is achieved depends on the scenario, it could mean pumping out powerful electromagnetic pulses, deploying dummy balloons the size of Landships equipped to show up on radar and send out a variety of signals and energy signatures, or firing a wave of anti-radiation missiles without asking permission from the human crew first.

As the Wagner is only one ship, it's typically left up to its massive supercomputer 'Morrigan' as much as the Captain to decide on a course of action. They use complex, inscrutable methods to plot out strategies and tactics to do as much damage as possible to enemy forces and morale. Usually this means annoying several Zones at once to distract enemy forces and obscure objectives before making a lightning-quick strike.

Gear Actors are often given odd objectives with no clear explanation, from simply landing somewhere and waiting there for a few seconds to destroying random buildings or attacking only specific enemy Gears. Ultimately these plots all come together as a brilliant, grand strategy. In theory. Often the odd requests from the AI have seemingly no effect on the mission. Or at least none that Actors can see from their limited perspective.

Much of the strategy used by the Morrigan and 'her' crew plays into the low morale of the UEF's populous. Years of tyrannical leadership, brutal enforcement, and imprisonment in ghettos have made the people receptive to the idea of revolution, and the general distrust and hate they have for the armed forces of the UEF is a constant weight on the shoulders of the people who serve. As guerillas, outnumbered and outgunned everywhere they go, the RUF realize how important morale is to an army better than the own politicians they undermine, playing with their troops like a cat's cradle.

Between Operations, the crew of the Wagner have the same worries as any other cell in the RUF. They get supplies from the black market, scavenge them from downed UEF transports or abandoned bases. They train their Actors to the best of their abilities; the Wagner's onboard AI allowing them to use simulators, unlike the vast majority of RUF cells.

The Wagner serves the cause in other ways as well. As the flagship and symbol of the resistance, its crew has to act politically on some occasions, showing up to meetings with important supporters, appearing at any major RUF meetings (rare events, to be sure, but they do happen) and perhaps most importantly, posing for the camera once in a while so the people back in the Sanctuary Districts have a pretty face to put to the resistance.



## Rumors

\* The Wagner is an amazing machine. Some would say that the technology it uses, especially the reliance on AI, is more than a little too close to what the SSA used to use to be merely a coincidence. Though it has not demonstrated any kind of ability to escape orbit - yet - it certainly could have survived re-entry and only needed a new coat of paint.

\* The Morrigan itself is not just an AI, it is the transplanted personality of a scientist, a general, and a historian each with its own objectives and plans. This would certainly explain the schizophrenic nature of some of its designs, but the possibility that they might be actively trying to outdo the other and what this means for the ones that are to be its pawns makes the RUF shudder.

\* There is more than one Wagner. The reason for the rumors of its invincibility and tactical prowess is just smoke and mirrors, covering up every failure. Several Wagners have been shot down already, and each one has been covered up by the RUF.

## Liberated Areas

Two Zones have been freed from the UEF's control in North America: Zone 4 (New York) and Zone 16 (Los Angeles). The success of these two operations is something that the RUF is struggling to prove was no fluke. Plans are being made for a strike into another Zone, though the location is being kept secret until the last minute.

The Battle for the Liberation of New York marked the first appearance of the Wagner and, to date, the only major victory through military force from the RUF. It was a lightning-fast strike that used the confusion of the new ship as much as its armaments to make an impact on the enemy. The battle was fierce but the RUF took surprisingly few losses. At first.

The reason why the UEF's resistance seemed so light was because they had decided to abandon New York. They didn't intend to allow the rebels to keep it. Initiating a Burned Earth directive from the highest levels of the UEF, an experimental 3G-Bomb was dropped in the area once the majority of GAF forces and officers had evacuated or surrendered. The devastation was total, worse than an atomic bomb.

Part of the reason the G-Bomb was so terrible is that it caused every Gygravagnite drive and device in its area of effect to overload and explode, fuelling the devastation. Every speck of Gygravagnite was consumed and turned to a toxic, radioactive dust.

Every trace of life within a dozen kilometers was wiped out by a deadly burst of radiation and fire. The land itself was salted and killed - scientists think it will be centuries before any kind of life can return to colonize the area. The 3G-bomb detonation wiped out the guerrilla forces that had gathered to take Zone 4. It also wiped out all districts in Zone 4.

The RUF has yet to recover its numbers, and the area surrounding Zone 4 has been all but abandoned by its few survivors. What had been intended as the first strike in a campaign through Canada and towards the UEF stronghold of Zone 1 (Boston) ended in death, stillborn before it even got underway. The GAF also learned a valuable lesson that day - that failure on their part would not be tolerated, and that their superiors in the UEF were more than willing to sacrifice them if they were no longer useful.

The battle for Los Angeles fared much better, a real success instead of a Pyrrhic victory. The Pacific Fleet had been destroyed by a berserking Outsider after it radically changed course for reasons unknown, leaving Zone 16 with a glaring hole in its defense by sea - a hole that the UEF was hard pressed to fill, and they were unwilling to commit their Atlantic naval forces to fill the gap, wary of more attacks from the Outsiders. It seemed they were as much in the dark about the plans of their masters as everyone else.

The RUF was quick to capitalize on the opportunity, and began a month-long campaign of hit and run attacks against the GAF's crucial facilities in the area. With supplies running low, morale all but gone, and no reinforcements in sight from the UEF, the officials of Zone 16 surrendered to the rebel forces. Rebellion forces were quick to take over the area, and carefully avoided disabling the anti-aircraft defenses around the city. This foresight was proven wise when they stopped a UEF strike and prevented a 3G-Bomb attack on the city.

Los Angeles is currently the largest urban area under RUF control, and its position as the Safe Zone on the North American continent farthest from Boston and other stronger Zones assists in keeping it free as much as the natural defenses around it, with mountains on one side, the sea on the other.

With the help of the Wagner's diversions and the rebels constantly on watch, there's a decent chance the city might even survive to see the end of the war.

## Rumors

\* The other reason behind the general reluctance of the UEF to more widespread use of the 3G-Bomb is that it creates a brewing cauldron of strange, bizarre phenomena that defies all known conceptions of time and space on a daily basis, and that having such a thing close to their base of operations is not something the UEF is interested in.

\* The Outsider that attacked the UEF's Pacific fleet was drawn to them because of a prototype beacon that a RUF agent smuggled onto the Pacific Fleet Flagship. The beacon's use was a great success, but their limited range and the unpredictability of the Outsiders has made opportunities to try and use a second beacon rather limited.

\* Most of what was the Zone 16 military is still in place, including the people. They didn't surrender because they were running out of supplies, they surrendered after making sure the RUF would give them favorable terms. They now work alongside the rebels and continue doing the job of protecting their city, but without alien overlords.

## Important Targets

The rebels are not lacking for targets. The primary target, out of reach for the moment, is Boston, the UEF's seat of power and the site of Safe Zone 1. It's the Zone the UEF always shows in propaganda, a virtual paradise compared to the martial law and ghettos of the other Safe Zones.

There are no ghettos in Zone 1 - it is reserved only for the elite and their families.

Boston is one of the few places that has expanded beyond its original city limits since it was made into a Safe Zone. Because refugees were kept out of the Boston area, its citizens continue to enjoy the benefits of a pre-Outsider lifestyle.

The UEF's control here is more of a velvet glove than the iron fist they use elsewhere. Careful information control has kept the population ignorant of the real situation, and most assume that other Safe Zones have the same quality of life they enjoy. UEF propaganda is on every vidscreen and street corner, painting them as heroes and vilifying the RUF - it is, in many ways, the platonic ideal of a Sanctuary District made real.

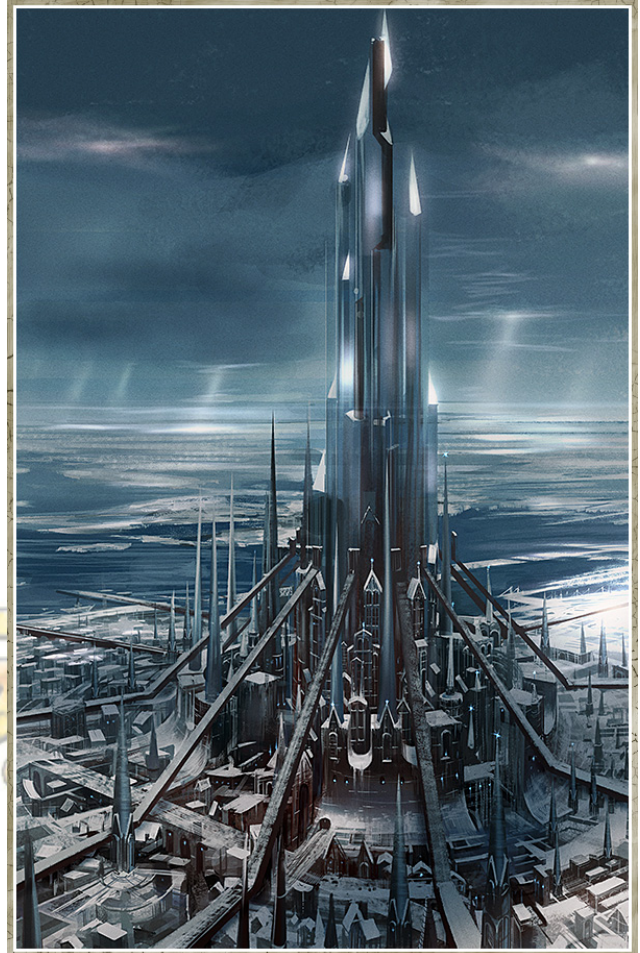
The city is heavily defended, protected by multiple defense lines that cover all sides. It is all but impenetrable to outside attack and much time has been spent, perhaps wasted, in trying to find a flaw in the layers and layers of defensive measures. The center of the city is a literal citadel fortress, like a castle from ancient times updated to the modern age, with walls almost a half of a kilometre high.

Aside from Boston, the second most prioritized target in North American territory is Zone 11, a military fortress built over what used to be Indianapolis. Like Boston, the Zone has no ghettos, but for an entirely different reason. There are no civilians at all in the Zone - it doesn't even have a Sanctuary, for it is just a giant prison, filled with captives forced to do dangerous slave labor in the prison camps. Tales of abuse of all kinds from the prison are common.

The slave labor in the camps is mostly restricted to menial or demeaning labor, designed as much to humiliate the captives as to punish them. The best the prisoners can hope for is to do farm work, and do something that will at least let them steal some food for themselves to keep them above the purposeful starvation level the UEF keeps them at. Makework and misery aren't the only things that Zone 11 produces, though. It houses the UEF's most important factories, using AI Boards as a workforce (the prisoners obviously can't be trusted with such an important duty) to produce almost all of the Gears, Vehicles, Weapons, other Boards, and further military hardware and pack it to be shipped to other Zones.

Indianapolis' ability to mass produce entire armies to make up for losses is one reason the RUF is finding a war of attrition hard to wage. If the rebels could deny the UEF the capabilities of the Zone, they would have a solid chance of winning the war through sheer strength of arms and tactics.

Naturally, such a thing is easier said than done. Zone 11 is under guard so heavy that is only second to that of Boston. There is a special military division devoted to defending Zone 11 at all times, a massive force of Gears and vehicles produced on site. The forces are heavy and ruthless. There have been reports of them using prisoners as human shields (literally, in some cases) to keep RUF units from attacking.



## Rumors

\* At Zone 11 there are places that people won't go, not even the machines keeping the place running. People have seen and heard strange beings in these dark places; those who have seen too much simply vanish. Some say it's Cryptids. Some say it's spies. Some say it's worse than either of those and refuse to elaborate.

\* Zone 1 has its own problems. They aren't the loud kind that anyone hears about - every crime is hushed up and criminals just vanish behind the scenes never to be seen again. The UEF is planning on dealing with these problems proactively, through something called the 'MKGREEN System.' Details on the project are few, but the UEF has been placing orders for large numbers of infrasound speakers and recruiting audio technicians.

\* Zone 19, Dallas, has recently been confirmed as the next target of the guerilla. Exactly what they're planning on doing to take the city is unknown, though some think that they've cut a deal with the political leaders of the city.



## The Gear Armed Forces

The Gear Armed Forces would be an insurmountable enemy if they weren't acting as the arm of the most paranoid and ineffective parental organization on the planet. The GAF is an army run by politicians, an arrangement that hasn't worked at any point in history. In this case, those politicians are the six most powerful men in the world, a council of figureheads from the most important member nations of the UEF. Each one is a brilliant politician, and between them they have less military sense than an orangutan with a few medals pinned to his chest.

As everyone knows, the UEF will do anything to be on the good side of the Outsider invasion force, up to and including sacrificing their own people.

The power of the Outsiders has already been well shown when they destroyed the majority of humanity's efforts to colonize space, and that unspoken threat backs much of the UEF's dictates - do as we say or the Outsiders will get upset and destroy you. The UEF is the only go-between humanity has with the Outsiders, and so if you want to grow old and have kids, the only option is to follow their orders.

The GAF's own divisions generally hold no lost love for their distant alien masters - they're still human in the end and resent the Outsiders as much as anyone. However, the majority of them help the UEF dominate the rest of humanity with the promise that serving in the military will guarantee the safety of their families and ensure their future.

One of the greatest rewards their Actors can earn is to have their families moved to a Sanctuary District, or perhaps even to Zone 1 itself. There in Boston, life is a virtual paradise, especially compared to the hellhole of the Zones that many crawl out from. Of course, such soldiers often become so estranged from their families that their help is no longer welcome, just seen as another tool of the UEF's oppressive government.

In practice, these great rewards are merely propaganda, and the heroes that they portray are just playing a part to inspire the masses. Every squad out there tries their best to look after their own, avoid the worst of the politics that run their lives, and do their job to protect the people of the UEF - and make no mistake, most in the GAF do think they're doing their best to protect the people around them. Most of the time, the best they can do is protect themselves from the UEF itself.

Realistically, the best that a soldier can hope for is to enjoy the simpler benefits of military life. They get medical attention, eight hours of sleep every night, clean food and water. For someone who has been living in a ghetto, those prizes are worth even doing the distasteful things the UEF demands of them.

The GAF employs a few standard-issue Gears that have been in service for a number of years now. While proven technology, their raw performance is inferior to what the guerrillas can field. However, the GAF has the advantage of numbers, far superior training, and support from hundreds of Boards.

They would have buried the RUF by now if not for the constant harassment of the Wagner.

The Wagner has become something of a questing beast for the members of the GAF. Its visibility in most important RUF conflicts has made it a famous target, and one with a large bounty on its head.

It is well known that the UEF would richly reward the one who brings down the Wagner, setting them up for life. Bringing the ship down has become a competition, with many sabotaging each other so their peers can't claim the prize for themselves.

However, things are starting to look bad for the RUF. A new line of war machines is starting to be deployed by the GAF: the 'Glory' line of Gears, machines that move like living things, with grace and speed beyond any other UEF-made unit to date.

Those who have faced them in combat have reported that it's no surprise they move and act like that - Glories are literally a creature of unknown nature (though everyone's money is on them being some sort of Outsider) encased in armor.

Only a handful of Glories have been produced so far but each one has the same power, or more, as the very best Gears that the rebels can field. Most in the UEF believe that once the Glory is mass-produced, the RUF is finished.



### Rumors

\* Each of the six people who lead the UEF have been inside the Outsider ship. Whenever one needs to be replaced, his replacement is taken into the alien's ship. Whatever they see or do in there, afterwards they're left totally loyal to the aliens. It doesn't look like fear. It looks like they saw something that they're still in awe of, and they've been promised rewards for serving it.

\* Actors who get too good, who 'retire' to live in Boston with their families? It's true that they leave their old hometown. Then they vanish, along with everyone who knows them. The leaders of the UEF don't want anyone getting too much personal power just in case they decide to try and butt in on their gig or worse, join the rebellion.

\* The Glory is proving difficult to mass-produce, but it's even more difficult to Enact. It has a tendency to go berserk on the field of battle when damaged (or injured, depending on what you want to call it), and more than once they've come back empty, with no trace of the Actor except a few bloodstains.

# The Clarke Foundation

## The Space Colonies

The creation of the first Space Colony, Asimov I, was considered the true start of the Space Age. It was the most important symbol of the human race's progress and technology in the 21st Century, a symbol of humanity's desire to explore, improve itself, and find its place in the stars.

Asimov I was among the most difficult construction projects ever attempted. It was a torus almost two kilometers in diameter, able to house a population of a hundred thousand, using the most advanced Gygravagnite technology available to keep its systems secure and stable. It had enough redundant systems to run everything twice over, with a third layer of redundancy in the most vital systems. It was a home among the stars that was even safer than the Earth, in some ways.

The ring-shaped Asimov colonies were designed to rotate around a control hub set into the center of the torus, the centrifugal forces creating gravity in a simple yet effective way. The hub at the center, remaining in Zero-G, was intended for use as fast transit for cargo and people from one part of the colony to another. The remainder of the colony was kept at about half-normal Earth gravity, enough to allow a normal life and prevent the worst ravages low gravity environments had to offer.

Every part of the colonies was purposeful. Not a single square meter was wasted, and most of the pejoratively-called spacenoids have a habit of keeping their arms close in near their bodies for safety's sake, and rarely use gestures for emphasis when speaking, lending them a somewhat reserved, or half-hearted, air.

Someone visiting the colonies from Earth would notice quite a few things as marked differences between the colonies and anything on Earth. The horizon curves upwards, and though at the scale of the Asimov I the curvature is slight, it often makes those unused to it feel as though they're looking at the world through a lens. The sky isn't a blue expanse, or even a black void. It's steel, just an endless curved ceiling.

A dozen colonies were built, in clusters of three around Lagrange points 1, 2, 4, and 5. Every colony was slightly different; some built to serve what needs the spacenoids had, others as an experiment, to see how humanity's effort to conquer the stars could be improved. A number of colonies had extra hydroponics and agricultural equipment to serve as farms. Some had complex industrial centers at their hub to fabricate things in zero gravity.

The colonies were only populated by the cream of the crop from Earth. The ones allowed to emigrate from Earth were the best in their fields, astronauts, scientists, engineers, and biologists. Every kilogram brought into space had to be carefully portioned, and people were the worst dead weight of all. It was almost like a lottery or a competition, and more than a few gave up their families to escape into the void.

The scientific and professional expertise of the Earth drained out into space, leaving behind bad feelings that persist to this day.

It seemed as though things were going to go well for the Colonists. And naturally, History's incredible sense of irony meant that this wasn't going to last for long. Only a few days after the celebration of Asimov I's founding anniversary, the Outsiders appeared.

The spacenoids put up as much fight as they could, but they were terribly outmatched. In less than a day, there was only floating wreckage where hundreds of thousands of lives had once been.

The Battle of the 23 Hours started with the three Heinlein colonies at Lagrange 5 being crushed by the Outsider's ship in its careless and dramatic entry. Even as the colonists were reeling in shock from the magnitude of the tragedy, every colony at Lagrange 1 was torn apart in a series of surgical strikes from the Outsider ship. Asimov I through III were blown into shrapnel, most of which fell down to the Earth and helped cement the fear of Outsiders and helped the UEF pin the blame on the SSA soon after. The rest of the destroyed stations still float in place, undisturbed.

The fate of Lagrange 4's Wells bunch was perhaps the worst of all. While Lagrange 1 and 5 at least left some survivors, Lagrange 4 was erased. They vanished into thin air. No trace of the three colonies, of the hundreds of thousands of lives that had been there, remained. Various theories have been put forth to explain their utter vanishing, but none have been proven. Humans simply lack the ability to test any of them, and the Outsiders certainly don't answer questions.

Only Lagrange 2 was spared total annihilation. They huddled in the dark, not taking part in the ill-fated offensive against the Outsiders, watching in horror as almost every other sign of humanity's expansion into space was turned into space dust. Because they made no overt sign of resistance, simply trying to hide, they, and them only, managed to avoid total annihilation.

Today, the Colonies of Lagrange 2 - Verne I, II, and III - stand relatively united, each of them trying to gain an upper hand by keeping a stranglehold on resources that the others require.

Verne I is the only one of the three that produces enough agriculture to be self-sustaining, and its surplus feeds the other two colonies as well. This arrangement was in place even before the Outsiders arrived, though now their production is more important than ever.





Verne II has control of Lunar reserves of Gygravagnite, and they ration it out while working on their own great master plan, Project Odyssey. The ultimate goal of Project Odyssey is to construct a vast fleet of ships to evacuate the hundred and forty four thousand colonists towards a near-by inhabitable star system before the Outsiders or their pawns in the UEF come back into space to finish the Colonies off.

Verne III has the best medical and biotech of the colonies. They mostly pay off the other colonies with medical supplies and care for the injured. To those in the know, though, Verne III is more important as the base of operations for the Clarke Foundation, a mysterious organization that has its own seat in the ruling body of the Colonies.

### Rumors

\* Notable among the colonies is that Lagrange 3 is, officially, empty. While it doesn't have the stability of Lagrange 4 or 5, or the proximity to Luna enjoyed by Lagrange 1 and 2, it's still valuable real estate. Of course, some say that it isn't empty at all, and that there has always been a colony there, hidden and watching. Ships that go near Lagrange 3 never return.

\* Ever since the disappearance of the Wells Lagrange 4 colonies, there have been intermittent radio signals proceeding from there directed exclusively at the Verne bunch. The majority of these signals are too distorted to decipher, though a few seem to have the correct radio protocols to have originated in the Colonies.

\* The administration of the Verne Colonies didn't escape the notice of the Outsiders because they refused to fight them. The truth is much the opposite - they cut a deal with the Outsiders and part of that deal was that they wouldn't oppose them. The deal had some rather harsh terms for the colonies, which is why they're preparing to cut and run before the bill is due.

### Culture

The Lagrange 2 cluster of colonies was originally colonized as a business venture, and the first inhabitants were the privileged backers and the people they hired to work for them. Originally, the colonies were run with a loose form of democracy, but in recent years, in no small part because of the stresses of a cold war, the democracy that served to entice people to come to the colonies was replaced.

The Verne Colonies are now run like a company, with a board of directors instead of an executive power. In truth, the arrangement is not really different from the way the situation has always been. Even as a democracy, the Verne colonies were always carefully managed by the backers that had organized them, and the political system had been intended as a show to appease the masses of workers. Now with the Outsiders having destroyed their previous seat of power at Asimov I, the pretense was dropped, and the figurehead rulers were replaced with a simple Public Relations department.

Life in the Verne Colonies has changed substantially since the Subjugation. Previously, the majority of those at Lagrange 2 were professionals, not workers. They traded assets and made their way through life with commerce and the stock market. Now there is no one left to trade with, no stock market, and those assets that they lived on are beyond their reach or gone entirely. Those lucky enough to have useful skills were able to find gainful employment, but a fair part of the population was reduced to doing unskilled labor in the wake of the disaster. Many snobs soon found themselves shoulder to shoulder with the blue-collar workers they had hired to tend Verne I.

Of course, this isn't true for everyone. The colonies still have their own upper class, the elite of the elite, who have managed to hang onto much of their old lifestyles. This upper class runs the Verne Colonies directly, through the Board of Directors, and indirectly as the only people with the luxury to do more with their lives than work from day to day.

The culture of the colonies reflects the frustration and hopelessness of those who live there. There is a harsh dichotomy between what happens during the day and at night, with everyone going about their business and spending ten hours a day working at a soul-crushing job to put money in their wallets and food on the table. At night, the cities are wrapped in a decadence that would make Rome blush. Nearly all the richest men and women have their fingers in the business of vice, and nearly a third of the money passing through the hands of the average colonist ends up being spent in pursuit of their own particular escape from the horrors of their lives.

Some of the most popular activities are fight clubs, often carried to such an extreme that people are left scarred or crippled for life; all-you-can eat buffets with included vomitoriums, an extraordinary decadence for a people who barely have enough food for everyone; and of course every type of fetish club that can be imagined, often with activities that would be illegal anywhere else in the solar system.

## Rumors

\* The board of directors for the Verne Colony has a vested interest in the events taking place on Earth. Their ultimate goal isn't to help anyone but themselves - they're creating conflict and war to keep everyone busy until their own plans can come to fruition.

\* While it's true that almost any vice can be quenched in the Colonies, there are a few things that they have flatly made illegal. Some are obviously for everyone's benefit - no smoking as it would contaminate the air supply, the same goes for anything that would cause damage to the structure of the colonies. Oddly, though, the list of forbidden activities includes certain types of music, a number of mind-altering drugs, and the game 'BOARD WARS', all of which are almost universally found and shut down by authorities.

\* The most bizarre development regarding the night-time eccentricities of Verne II's scene is that of 'transhumanism cults.' Though no official word has been given regarding their existence, the rumors of fantastic machines that enhance the body and give the user incredible powers are rather enticing to the beleaguered citizens.

## The Return of the Cryptids

There are two reasons that a Colonist might not indulge in Verne's peculiar pastimes. Neither of them has anything to do with being worried about the sins they're committing, though the folk at Verne I were always better adjusted than their peers. The primary reason is simply because they don't have enough money to spend any at the brothels or bars others usually frequent. But there's another reason that some stay behind closed doors at night, locking themselves away: Fear.

The rumors say that the Colonies of Verne have become host to a threat that preys on its citizens at night, when they're most vulnerable - the Cryptids. Named after the unknown lifeforms that were said to have appeared in the Far West Archipelago, the Verne Cryptids have one key difference. Instead of appearing in the middle of nowhere, in radioactive wastes far from anything inhabited, never provoking more than rumors or starring in miner's ghost stories, they are showing up in places that are dangerously populated.

People are disappearing and reappearing completely off their minds, or never returning again. No one can confirm the numbers, and they are being kept out of the news as much as possible to avoid panic, but they are steadily growing. Almost everyone can name a friend or a friend of a friend who has simply gone missing or inexplicably changed. Hundreds of people claim that they've seen supernatural or unexplainable things that could only be Cryptids, and even with a lid being kept on the most terrifying or explosive stories, they're still the hot media buzz around the colonies.

But life goes on. Outside of giving the press a lot of sensationalism for the people working during the day to read over and talk about at lunch, very little has actually been done about the problem. In some places security has been increased - typically only after a major sighting that the Council is unable to explain away, and rarely for more than a day or two. The official word changes from day to day, depending on who the Council wants to blame. Cynics say that it changes depending on the time of day, weather, and mood they're in when the interviews are given.

What's being reported is as diverse as it was back on Earth at the height of the Far West Cryptid sightings, and if anything the things that are being seen are only getting more and more bizarre as time goes on. The list includes such gems as a man who looked like he was being projected from a torn film strip, out of focus and upside-down, walking on thin air with his head touching the ground, or animals made out of stained glass with snow for eyes and teeth. Perhaps the most ridiculous sighting was of a car with vegetation for bodywork nearly running over a drunk and, perhaps understandably, extremely upset man. While most were incredulous - drunk men are rarely reliable sources of information - several days after making his report the man was found dead in his home, apparently having been lying in bed for days completely unresponsive until his death.

The fact of the matter is that after a long period of inactivity, the Cryptids have returned in full force. Instead of lurking amongst deserted hills and valleys, only really being seen much when they intruded on miners in Gygravagnite mines, they're appearing in lunar craters and dark alleyways in the tangled cityscape that fills the Verne Colonies. Eventually, it will be impossible to deny that the Cryptids exist, or that these events are their fault. That is, unless the Clarke Foundation solves this problem first.

## Rumors

\* Cryptids can appear as anything, even a person. The smartest ones can even act human, at least for a little while. Anyone could be a Cryptid, and the first sign you'll have is when they start doing things just slightly wrong - showing strange habits, repeating sounds over and over again, or moving in ways that no person could naturally attempt.

\* The Cryptids aren't alien in origin at all. They were created by human hands as a bioweapon that could adapt to any battlefield, but they have gone out of control and it is only a matter of time before they out-compete life everywhere else in the solar system.

\* The disappearances have nothing to do with the Cryptids, at least not directly. They're just a cover for the government to use to get rid of problem people, using the fear of the unknown to keep people from asking too many questions. Better, in being the ones to investigate, they can get rid of all the evidence that they were the culprits.



## Enter the Foundation

The Clarke Foundation is a group that has been shrouded in mystery since its inception. Even the date of its founding is unknown, the records lost in the Subjugation (if they weren't erased or simply nonexistent in the first place). Recently, they have started being far more active, and showing up in the public eye. According to their Public Relations department, they are one of many scientific groups studying the properties and applications of Element G.

A few papers have come out of the Clarke Foundation, most detailing some minor refinement on genetic manipulation. None are particularly exciting or notable; the kind of papers that show simple advancements rather than massive breakthroughs. The main business of the Clarke Foundation would seem to be limited runs of specialized medical-use Nanomachines. They do not produce products that the average consumer, or even the average doctor, would know about, but specialists speak highly of their ability to produce small batches to exacting specifications.

Additionally, the Clarke Foundation is listed on many budgets and reports filed by the Military Police's 'Special Investigations Department'. The details of exactly what they do is sealed and kept secret, with their contributions being listed only as a third party contractor. A lot of guesses have been made as to what they're actually doing, and it's not hard for most to accurately assume it has something to do with investigating the Cryptids.

Even people working for the Foundation usually don't know the truth. The Foundation has layers upon layers of secrecy, with work broken down between departments and shifts so that no one is ever working on more than a small part of the whole except at the highest levels.

The official story on the inside is that they are investigating alternate energy sources to replace or supplement the limited supply of Gygravagnite.

Most who work for them figure out that one of the primary missions of the Clarke Foundation is to investigate areas that have reports of Cryptid activity. They then track them down and capture them, alive if possible, using Gears that were specially designed and built by the Foundation.

What is done with the captured Cryptids is unknown except at the highest level - only those with the most advanced clearance are ever allowed to even come close to the containment units where the Cryptids are being held, and internal records simply state it as 'research into their natural energy signatures'.

The more detailed reports and findings are only available to those in the know, stored on secret servers and hidden disks. The only people who ever find those reports are the ones that already have the clearance to look at them - when someone thinks they've managed to crack the system and find something they're not allowed to look at, that is only the test to see if they're ready to handle a promotion. That those who do accept the offer remain silent of what they saw speaks worlds about how important that data must be.

The hiring practices of the Foundation are quite unique as well. They aren't the kind of place to hold job fairs or go through applications. When they decide they would like to hire someone, it's after carefully researching them. The Foundation usually takes a proactive stance in the hiring process, planting HR Representatives to engineer a casual meet up with a prospect. These HR Reps are almost always skilled psychoanalysts, and the casual meet up is really a way to get a bead on someone's psychology. If it goes well, things progress to the next stage.

Interviews are always handled the same way - potential new hires are paid a visit by very well dressed men in black, escorted (often blindfolded) to wherever it is that they hold interviews, and asked some very hard questions.

Those who answer incorrectly are never heard from again. Those who answer correctly, well, that depends on just what job they got. The most interesting position, though, is that offered at the Childhood Department of Field Operations. It's a lifetime job, whether you want it to be or not.

### Rumors

\* Despite the seeming lack of extraordinary science coming out of the Clarke Foundation, it is obvious the scientists working for them are some of the most brilliant in the Earth Sphere. What most would never suspect is that this has been the case for decades and that they are the real reason behind the existence of the Verne cluster, or perhaps of the colonies themselves.

\* The Clarke Foundation isn't lying when they say they're a laboratory that studies Element G. Their current study into Cryptids is due to the definite links between them and the strange properties of Gygravagnite. Specifically, they think the Cryptids are Element G, or produce it, or are produced by it, or possibly all three.

\* The Foundation's research into alternative energy sources is actually an attempt to figure out what exactly it is that Outsiders are made of so as to engineer a way to destroy them - or scare them out of our planet - in a single blow. Were they to succeed, they would single handedly become the most powerful people in the entire solar system.

## The Mission

All Field Operatives, sometimes ironically called 'Children' by their co-workers after the Department's unfortunate name, receive a variety of surgeries as part of the training for their job.

The exactitudes of this surgery are unknown to all but the doctors who perform them, with even the operatives only knowing a few of the most obvious modifications - positioning locators implanted in their bodies, a subdermal communicator, and retinal readouts loaded with useful information being the most common. Most agents can compare their augmentations and find only a few in common, each one custom-built just for their use.

One of the most important implants that agents could receive, is a Nanomachine hive that has a variety of functions. The nanomachines increase the natural healing rate of the agents, prevent most common diseases, decrease blood loss in case of injury, and so forth. The usefulness of the operative's implants end there, at least for the agent. The rest of the enhancements they're given are more for the benefit of the Clarke Foundation than anyone else. If they read the fine print in their contracts, they quickly learn that they're as much 'property' of the Foundation as the Gears that they Enact.

According to the 'Field Operative's Handbook', which every agent's retinal implants are loaded with by default, one of the other primary functions of the nanomachines is to alter the Operative's DNA, allowing them to interface with the unique Gears developed by Foundation scientists. These Gears are smaller than the standard Gear size and well-suited to urban environments. Actors have some complaints - often it feels less like driving a Gear and more like trying to get an animal to obey commands from a rider. Some of the oldest Gears are said to have strong, uncooperative personalities, occasionally acting on their own.

As if it wasn't foreboding enough already, the Handbook mentions 'organic energy' constantly when describing the functionality of their Gears. The simple truth, obvious to anyone who has been an Operative for long, is that they are actually some kind of living creature. They might be Outsiders, Cryptids, or something made entirely by man. Scientists don't answer questions, and most Actors have learned not to ask them. But when they're damaged in combat and start bleeding highly pressurized, ichor-like blood or when they move on their own, it's hard to deny that there's something there.

The primary assumption among Actors is that the Gears, whatever they are, are being restrained and forced into action. The way they resist commands, go berserk, and otherwise end up being ornery machines backs up that assumption. However, some think that the Gears are serving of their own volition. That camp of Actors treats their machines as partners or equals, and they have notably greater success on some types of missions, though given the small sample size it's impossible to tell if this is because of the Actors' own skill or because their methods really work.

The Field Operative's Handbook further details what the agents are expected to do with these Gears. Their primary mission is to subdue or eliminate Cryptids before they can cause too much damage - ideally before many people have even realized the Cryptid was there. The standard operating procedure is for them to bring the contained Cryptid to a retrieval point or, if that is impossible, to call in for a pickup team. No place is off-limits to Clarke Operatives on a case, and they've been given authority from the highest level to keep civil and military security agencies away from delicate situations.

Operatives technically answer only to their own superiors at the Foundation, and while they're normally tasked with keeping the public from learning too much and told not to answer questions from outside agencies, most operatives quickly learn that following the rulebook on that is not the best way to make friends and that they count on those very civil and military agencies for much of their support in the field. Many operatives who don't realize this have to make do with no support at all from outside agencies, or worse - are branded 'potentially dangerous' by other agencies or even the Foundation itself.

Because there's no way to predict the attacks of Cryptids or where they might appear next, Foundation Operatives have to be on-duty and ready to jump into their Gears and deploy at a moment's notice to anywhere in the Verne Cluster. A single creature might be found haunting the night-shift at a factory in an industrial sector, a whole swarm of them might take residence in the maintenance shafts that lead outside the colonies themselves, or they might be covering the outside of the station like barnacles and interfering with communications or cooling.

Unfortunately, not much is said in the Handbook about what the Cryptids actually are. It states that they're a 'spontaneously generated lifeform', which conveys very little about what they are, but essentially gives the gist that it is almost impossible to preempt them.

### Rumors

\* The Gears used by Operatives are Cryptids that have found just the perfect method to continue their hungry existences, by serving the Foundation as able battle bodies they are then allowed to feed on excess waste, captured Cryptids and traitors to the Foundation, and thus continuing to become stronger the better they do their jobs.

\* One thing the Operatives are never told about the nanomachines they have been given is that they can be used to shut down operatives that go rogue, stopping all their bodily functions and killing them in a matter of seconds.

\* An early-warning system has been designed to detect Cryptid activity. However, there must be some kind of intrinsic flaw in its design, because it's detecting massive numbers of events all over the Colonies. There's no way that number of Cryptids could possibly exist.



The Handbook goes on to list a few examples of how to subdue or harm Cryptids. These examples and tips are not exactly exhaustive or inventive, which can be partly blamed on the sheer variance seen in Cryptids, but in the end, they boil down to three tenets - 'Everything burns', 'Cryptids die when they are killed', and 'There is no such thing as Overkill'.

There is almost never any warning before a Cryptid appears. They simply come out of nowhere and take the form of whatever is around them, assimilating the surroundings to form a body. Normally, but not always, they mimic the original form of the materials, their body becoming a poor mockery of what was there before. Even the disappearances can be blamed on the 'birth' of a Cryptid in the vicinity of a human being, using their organic matter to form a body.

More worrisome perhaps is then how they are believed to be responsible of the loss in mental faculties of people who are exposed to them; not content with absorbing the body of a bystander who had no more fault than being in the wrong place at the wrong time, they are also capable of assimilating memories and entire personalities, which makes the prospect of hunting the smarter Cryptids much scarier.

## Having a Field Day

One of the most important parts of an Operative's training is learning how to work and fight in the various environments they'll encounter in their operations. The first thing they are taught is how to fight in Zero-G, for two reasons - it's easier to manage damage control for new operatives in space, and it's the most difficult part of training for most, and so tackling it first makes the rest of the practical training less stressful for the new Actor.

After Zero-G training is complete, the Actors learn the quirks of working in each individual colony. Despite the similarities in their construction, the specialization of each colony is different, and that means that the operatives have to learn about these subtle differences to best know how to investigate Cryptid appearances and engage them in combat.

Of particular importance is learning the sheer scale of Gears. They are big machines. Very big. Even if the Foundation is using some of the smallest Gears ever developed, they can't fit into spaces meant for people - there's no way to use a Gear to chase a Cryptid into a civilian's house that doesn't involve the Gear crashing through the building itself. And that sort of thing almost always ends up getting everyone into more trouble than it's really worth.

As such, after a Cryptid sighting has been confirmed and the entity located, the first job of Children Operatives is to lure them into an open space large enough to make use of their Gears. This is harder than it sounds - no space is wasted in the Colonies, and so the choices of open areas are somewhat restricted.

The most obvious place to take a Cryptid in order to avoid damage is space - that's enough open area for absolutely anything. However, luring them outside has its own difficulties, as expected.

Lucky operatives might find an abandoned warehouse to use as a battleground, and skilled ones might find ways to make sure they remain in midair for the duration of a bout, but in the end, most operatives have to choose what they're going to step on, and so part of an Operative's training involves learning how to decide between ruining farming fields or blasting a radio tower into scrap.

Verne I is the 'Granary of Space' and where the first sightings occurred. To this day the majority of sightings still occur there. Cattle and crops vanish in an almost weekly basis, and almost everyone has seen something odd. Verne I sports the lowest population index among the three colonies, and over half of its space is dedicated to agriculture. A further third of it is devoted to population centers, and the small remainder to just as small local industries.

The people of Verne I are hard workers, with a firm blue-collar culture where hard work is its own reward, and everyone is taught the family trade from a young age. These values have been drummed into the residents since the foundation of the colony with propaganda - some subtle, some obvious - that they're exposed to at almost every moment.

Slowly but surely, the people of Verne I are becoming paranoid of both outsiders and each other. The news there seems only to focus on the danger of what goes bump in the night, and any authorities investigating the area are looked on with fear - the people are all worried that saying the wrong thing will get them involved in something or taken away by men in black for the crime of learning too much.

Verne II is the literal seat of political and industrial power for the Verne Cluster. The other colonies aren't very fond of it - Verne I calls it a 'cesspool of debauchery' and the common opinion on Verne III is that it's just a 'miserable little pile of bureaucracy.'

Because of Verne II's industrial power, most attribute these feelings to simple sour grapes, but Verne II's authorities are specifically a problem, as they simply don't like the way the Foundation has been given so much more political importance, and so have more or less instructed their local companies not to cooperate.

Since there is little to no Cryptid activity on Verne II, the local authorities argue that it's a problem that they can solve on their own without outside help. The popular theory among seniors inside the Foundation is that since Verne II is hosting the Odyssey Project in secret, their general antagonism can be attributed to wanting to keep the ships all to themselves and that they see Verne III, and especially the Clarke Foundation, as a threat towards their goals.

Last, but far from least, is Verne III. It is something of an education center among the three Colonies, a place where the fringe and hip from Verne I and II head, hoping to make a name for themselves with great aspirations. It used to be a transitory Colony for most of its population, just a temporary place to pick up skills and training before returning home to their native Colony. Since the Outsider invasion, the shift of society at Verne II, and the arrival of the new wave of Cryptids, this has changed.



Verne III still depends on the other two Colonies, but without the contributions from Clarke and various other prominent laboratories, the limited resources would simply drain away

Without the outside help, they'd run into a food or energy crisis very quickly, and it's a matter of debate as to which would be the first to kill them.

### Rumors

\* Barbicane is fighting its own private war against the Cryptids. Because their superiors at Verne II keep the Foundation away as much as possible, they've had to fend for themselves. They never go anywhere unarmed, alone, or in the dark. Even so, the few hundred people on the moon is a steadily declining population and might end up trying to cut ties with the people that clearly don't care about them for good.

\* The last stage of training for Field Operatives is live combat against a captured Cryptid. This typically comes without warning or instruction from their superiors. Only half of the agents who get to that stage of training survive to graduate.

\* The Odyssey Project is almost ready to go. Verne II has been falsifying progress reports and making extra orders of materiel in order to cover their lies. They're planning on waiting - or creating - a crisis to draw the eyes of the Foundation away from them for a time, and then escaping with their entire population, leaving Verne I and III to rot.

Verne III has a moderate degree of Cryptid activity, but unlike Verne I's insular and fearful populous, the people of Verne III do their best to help authorities solve cases as long as it doesn't directly put their lives at risk.

While they don't know the details, almost everyone is aware of how deep the influence of the Foundation runs and would rather not help Verne II undermine their positions any further.

The last area of note in the cluster is the Lunar base of Barbicane, which is largely a Gygravagnite mine (the result of the only, and wildly successful, Type-R Gygravagnite seed mine still in existence) that spans a small continent's territory. Its machinery is all owned by Verne II, and its critical manpower shortages mean AIs are the ones really in charge of everything, with only a few hundred people living on-site. It's one of the most difficult places for Foundation Operatives to get to, as even in the face of massive Cryptid activity, even to the point of the Gygravagnite mines becoming unusable, the Verne II authorities make sure that the usual civilian route - a ferry from Verne II - is all but closed to them, and more than once Verne II's insistence on making it a headache to get operatives into place has cost lives.



It has been a long time since then, so I don't remember all of what I should. I regret that. But I couldn't risk writing down then what I want to tell you now. At the time, I was a young man. I just wanted an opportunity to make my name somewhere, and get away from the whole mess with my life and livelihood intact. I had always hoped that some day, somehow it would come out on its own. That they would tell you themselves, or that someone else would break the story to the world. But it never happened.

So I'll tell you myself. Because it's been too damn long, and if they want to kill me they can get in line. Cancer. I knew it was coming. Gave me longer than I expected. When I die, this shouldn't die with me.

My aunt on my father's side was Henrietta Tallman. That name doesn't mean much anymore, but in her day she was an accomplished physicist and metallurgist. In 2039, she had published a paper on theoretical high-energy environments, and the equally theoretical materials they could create. I never read it.

But when the biggest discovery of the century happened in 2043, she got a phone call and was off to the FWA. My father had been an honest man, but not a very successful one. Henrietta's position on the Gygravagnite research team pulled our whole family up out of the gutter. I guess I owe her for that, even if I was too young to remember.

And then 2045 happened, and she was gone. It was all so sudden, and my father didn't take it well. But we had been left well off, and benefited greatly from her will.

Years later, I graduated with a degree in African Studies and set out into the world. There was some property down in the United Pacific, just outside of Manila, that had passed on to us in Henrietta's will. We had used it as a vacation home once or twice, and father had always been looking for a reason not to sell it. So I moved into it in the summer of 2066, and started looking for work in the United Pacific.

You have to understand. We had been in the house maybe 4 times since my aunt died. It was very well hidden. I only found it by accident when I was setting rat traps, 4 months after I moved in. It was a safe.

Of course, the first thing I thought of was how valuable it was. How this little bit was worth more money than the safe could even hold. I never even thought about the risk involved, or what had happened to the man it was named after.

The real problem was the book. My Aunt's journal.

I thought that it might contain some stale but important research notes, taken from one of the original researchers firsthand. I thought that this might be worth just as much as the Gygravagnite, maybe more to the right buyer. I was right. God, I wish I wasn't.

I read the journal. More skimmed than read, I should say. I was looking for parts related to her Gygravagnite research, to make sure there was something worth selling in it. I was a dumb kid who didn't have the physics or metallurgy background to understand half of the stuff she talked about. I didn't know.

But I remember enough of it. I remember that one of her friends at the research labs was a Russian Neurosurgeon. I wish I had written down the name. Started with an R, I think. I had thought it strange that a Neurosurgeon had been called in to study rocks.

I remember reading that my aunt's friends had disproved the meteor impact that everyone thinks caused the Ring of Fire Tragedy. Something to do with distribution patterns. It worries me that people still don't know about that.

The strangest part was the last entry. I know what you think when you hear that, like it's going to end with her stopping mid-sentence and with there being blood on the page. There is nothing like that.

But she talks about Gygravagnite being... wave something. It knows when you are looking at it, and how you are looking at it, and it changes. It changes based on how you feel when you look at it, even.

I didn't believe a word of it. I thought the journal was worthless. If I had gotten half a chance, I might have even thrown it away.

But then the suits came. It only took them maybe five hours after I finally opened the safe. They showed up, told me that the contents of that safe were a matter of national security and made it clear in no uncertain terms that I was never to think of it again.

I was scared. Even now, the timing seems just so damn strange. That stuff had been sitting in that house for years, and they had never come for it. But the moment I opened it up, it's like they knew. Which makes me sound like a crazy old man, but it's what I believe.

Anyway, I was pretty shaken at the time. I tried to go back to my normal routine but... the fact that they came for the book made me think that it might not be so bogus after all. And after a week, I couldn't shake the feeling that someone was watching me, or going through my house when I was not home.

I didn't feel safe anymore, so I started looking for someplace else. And the more I looked, the more it hit me what the contents of my Aunt's journal really meant. How much the government was really keeping from us. I didn't feel safe on Earth anymore, so I sold the house and moved up to space the first chance I got.

A lot of people wanted on to the space colonies in those days, but I managed to buy my way up to work as a custodian on Lagrange 2 for a while. I eventually found better work, and then the SSA happened, and things went on from there. I never did go back to Earth since then. Not even for a day.

Looking back, I feel guilty for keeping this all to myself up until now. It's been a long 60 years since 2066, so it's not I like didn't have the time.

Looking back on everything that has happened in the last 20 years, and all the lives that have been lost, I can't help but feel that maybe if I had told the world what I knew sooner things might have gone differently...

I just wish I knew more to tell.



# CHAPTER 3



CHARACTER CREATION

## Character Concept

Unless you are going to be the GM, to play GGG you will need to create a Player Character. All Player Characters enact Gears, no matter whether you pilot for honor, duty, or love and regardless whether your aptitude comes out of your endurance, psychic powers, or DNA you need to keep this constant in mind: your character will sortie to participate in Gear combat.

Check with your GM every now and then when working on character creation to confirm if the character will fit the game he intends to run like a glove or if you should consider making some changes to make it a better experience for you and the rest, and do not hesitate to ask the GM or other players for help if you are unsure of something.

Before all the mechanics comes the PC's Concept, that is, a single phrase describing the core of your character. This phrase needs to describe who he is and what he does, such as "Royal Secret Agent" or "Charismatic Antihero." You don't get lyrical or go overboard with details, but shouldn't make it too simplistic either. This means that "Genius" is just as bad as "Fifteen Year Old Girl With a Physics Ph.D that Always Wears Blue, has Bleached her hair Blue, has Blue Lipstick, and Laughs Way Too Loud at her own Jokes." Instead of all that, use something like: "Eccentric Girl Genius."



Since PCs are, by definition, Pilots or Actors, they don't need to make piloting part of their concept. Only include piloting in the phrase if you want it to be a very important part of what makes the character themselves, such as for instance "Cocky Ace Actor" or "Carefree Wandering Gear Repairman."

Above all, it has to be a concept that you want to play with for a while and won't regret later. All PCs grow and change over time but you will be playing with yours as-is for a while so put some thought into it for convenience's sake.

A Concept can be spot-on or somewhat open-ended. Both have their own pros and cons so don't feel bad if yours looks like it is too short or too long, just avoid making it too much like the 'bad' examples above.

A PC concept is not a science - it does not even have a mechanical impact on your character, but it is supposed to help you focus your creative energies from their creation until their retirement and it gives the GM and other players a hint of what to expect from your PC.

### Player's Block

If you're stumped for Concepts, take a look at the following list of examples. Don't just use them as they are, but instead take them as inspiration and give them your own twists until you find something you are satisfied with:

- Cocky Ace Pilot
- Aloof Big Brother Figure
- Aristocratic War Hero
- Bratty Spoiled Nerd
- Carefree Wandering Mecha Repairman
- Rebellious Combat Junkie
- Charismatic Antihero
- World's Most Powerful Cyborg
- Dutiful Modern Samurai
- Eccentric Girl Genius
- Angry Space Marine
- Grizzled Old Veteran
- Hapless Everyday Salaryman
- Party to a Larger Conspiracy
- Power-Mad Technowizard
- Military Brat
- Royal Secret Agent
- Prettiest Face on TV
- Robot Ninja Maid
- Silver Tongued Cultist
- Captain Mom
- Unwilling Conscripted Pacifist
- World's Ninth's Wealthiest Person
- Optimist Young Prodigy
- Scientist in a Strange Field





## Character Creation Outline

Once you have an idea of what it is you'd like to play, you need to start filling in the details with a combination of hard rules and roleplaying hooks. This chapter goes through the steps required to finish creating your PC in the recommended order to make the process as streamlined as possible, but you should feel free to retrace your steps and fiddle with things until you feel satisfied.

### Step 0) Organizational Alignment

Every one of the three playable Organizations has a distinct identity, with their own goals, complications, and - of course - Gears. This is considered to be 'Step 0' because, by default, the group is supposed to be working for the same Faction. Having two or more Factions cooperate, or even creating new Factions of your own is possible, but is not assumed to be the default mode of play.

### Step 1) Starting Nature

The first real step towards completing that pretty character sheet you've got is to choose one of the four Natures. Each one will give your Character a default set of starting abilities and helps define their personality, aptitudes, and role in the battlefield.

### Step 2) Basic Customization

Your PC has 30 Pilot Points (PP) to customize him or her. You can increase the starting array of Attributes and Defenses from their Nature, give them a more defined set of Skills, and other, more ubiquitous, features from a selection of Traits. After that, calculate the Character's Plot Armor.

### Step 3) Personal Dramatic Themes

Go a little bit deeper into who the character is and what you want to do with them during the game, by selecting one Theme for each category: a Reason, a Typecast, and a Bane. Roleplaying these Themes will reward you with Genre Points.

### Step 4) Genre Powers

You can use the Genre Points gained during play to become much stronger during battle, breaking stalemates in your favor and saving allies from the brink of death, among other effects. You start with three Genre Points.

### Step 5) Finishing Touches

Calculate plot armor and write everything down in your character sheet. This section also has a questionnaire for you to provide the little quirks and perks of your PC that may not have an impact on the rules of the game but help shape them as a human being.

## Choose a Faction

Each and every organization has its own roster of Gears for any PCs that want to be Actors for it, and there are certainly more than those presented. There are as many as can be imagined, with a likewise variance in Gear availability.

Sometimes the GM will decide the faction that everyone will be part of beforehand. Other times, everyone will sit down and discuss as a group which of the three factions they want to align themselves with, and there will even be instances where allegiance does not really matter that much and will be left to the individual's free will.

### The Hiryu's Soaring Dragon Fortress

Those from the Soaring Dragon Fortress do battle against humanity's greatest perceived enemy - the Outsiders. Life in Hiryu is like living on an island Paradise when compared to the rest of the world, and, to the outside, they are the only thing that can save the world.

Characters hailing from Hiryu tend to be of Asian or Pacific descent with appropriate culture, and a game focusing on Hiryu will default to a similar tone and feel to that of classic Mecha anime and manga with robots as the equivalent to Japanese superheroes.

### The Guerilla's Wagner

The resistance is fiercely entrenched in warfare against no other enemy than humanity itself, and it shows in the kinds of PCs it creates. Characters hailing from the guerilla have seen humanity at its most evil and inhuman extreme, knowing all too well how far people are willing to go when forced to make a choice between themselves and others.

The game that focuses on the guerilla will feature a likeness to Mecha anime and manga of the 80s: grittier, edgier and more realistic to a degree, as realistic as giant robots can get.

### The Colonies' Clarke Foundation

The strangest of factions is perhaps that which is available to characters that live in what used to be the Solar Space Alliance, with goals as mysterious as their living, biomechanical variant of Gears. Those that belong to the Verne III colony where the Clarke Foundation holds sway are people full of potential and with ambitious aspirations, potential the Foundation wants to nurture and aspirations that have made them accept the Foundation's job offer. These PCs are underinformed, fighting an enemy that strikes faster they can predict and with allies that are anything but helpful, much like Mecha anime of the late 90s.





## Pilot Natures

Even though all PCs are made unique, characters from the Mecha Genre tend to hail from the same roots: the brash youngster full of potential, the smartass who works better alone, the mentor figure hardened by years of experience, and the team chick that usually is only there to fulfill the fanservice quota and sometimes keep the others from killing each other.

These four recognizable terrible stereotypes of cardboard-cut personalities are the building foundations from which more complex characters spring from, and as such they are present as temperamental templates for you to create a unique character that suits your style, under the name of Natures.

Natures have different base characteristics from each other and provide your PC with a starting advantage over others in their specialties. Although PCs from all Natures may excel at all activities they set their minds to training in, their Natures will serve as a helpful kickstart towards their abilities on and off of the battlefield, in the form of Genre Powers exclusive to them and a bonus to their starting Attributes and Plot Armor.

Choose one of the following four Natures and take note of their unique traits. These traits will make more sense later. Alternatively, read on and come back to choose a Nature later.



## The Prodigy

You have a happy-go-lucky optimistic and practical take on life that makes you easy to get along with. People may say that you're impetuous and disorganized, but you like to think that you're a free spirit, unpredictable and good at improvising.

As an Actor you have staying power and a powerful offense, with an assortment of tricks up your sleeve to guarantee that you have the right tool for the job at hand.

### Prodigy Attributes and Plot Armor:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	0	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
6	5	4

### Prodigy Free Traits:

#### **Always Changing:**

After every Arc you may choose to lose any number of your known Genre Powers to learn an equal number of other Genre Powers from the list available to you.

#### **Like a Flash:**

Once per Operation you may use a Called Genre Power at Instant speed.

## The Ace

You are an independent, analytical mind capable of complex strategical thought with an utilitarian mindset. There is nothing you cannot do if you set your mind to it. Now if only you had those mysterious so-called 'people skills' in your ever expanding toolset you'd be perfect.

As an Actor you emphasize strategy and surgical precision in your attacks, developing a counter to your enemy's style then swiftly moving in for the kill.

### Ace Attributes and Plot Armor:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	2	0
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	6	5

### Ace Free Traits:

#### **Adaptable Mind:**

You may start play with one Genre Power from another Nature in place of one of yours.

#### **Stack the Odds:**

You may use two Genre Powers per Round instead of one, but only once per Operation.





## The Coordinator

You are a person of profound idealism and a mind set towards the deeper matters of life. You are a person of faith and imagination. Sometimes you are referred to as naive or overly sensitive but you are intrinsically positive and like people. And people like you for that.

As an Actor you are always looking out for the wellbeing of others and keeping them away from harm. However the strength of your conviction helps you make possible the impossible, proving that where there's a will there's a way.

### Coordinator Attributes and Plot Armor:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
0	1	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
5	4	6

### Coordinator Free Traits:

#### **Outside the Box:**

You may use a Genre Power you do not currently have from the Coordinator list of Powers, once per Operation.

#### **Devoted Comrade:**

You may spend Genre Points in the stead of an Ally once per Operation.

## The Professional

Your hard work and dedication makes you a great asset to many a team, and you are only demanding from others because you yourself are so reliable. Others may call you inflexible or even boring, and you often wish these people placed as much importance into teamwork and responsibility as you did.

As an Actor, your specialty are proven, tried and true tactics that make sure you always can contribute to the team, as well as a subset of stratagems that encourage teamwork and team cohesion under your leadership.

### Professional Attributes and Plot Armor:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	1	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
5	5	5

### Professional Free Traits:

#### **Seasoned Veteran:**

You start play with four additional Genre Powers instead of three.

#### **Practice Makes Perfect:**

You may repeat a Genre Power that you already used, once per Operation.



## Customizing the Character

Once you have a Nature, the next step is to customize it to your liking by selecting **Attributes, Plot Armor, Skills and Traits**, all of which help you resolve conflict during Intermissions. Attributes, Plot Armor and Skills come measured in numbers that distinguish the amateur from the pro, and **from Attributes you derive a characteristic that is called Defense.**

**Both Attributes and Skills take the form of a Modifier** to your Tests. **Defenses help you resist the effects of Tests from other people**, reducing their potency if not making them fail entirely, **while Plot Armor is a Rank** – a static number – which measures **how much you can endure** the consequences of said Tests not going your way.

**Traits** are a simpler 'buy and forget' deal that, although they come in **Minor, Medium and Major Traits**, are inter-dependent from each other, having no other Traits to compare as an 'upgrade' or 'downgrade' from. **When performing a Test** during a Scene you **roll 1d10 and add to the result your Total Modifiers** from the appropriate Attribute and Skill, then **compare it against the Difficulty Number** of the task you are trying to achieve. If your **result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number**, you have succeeded at what you were trying to do.

Should this Test be made against another character, **the Difficulty Number is equal to their corresponding Defense.** This means you want to: roll high, have high Modifiers to your Attributes and Skills, and to increase your Ranks in Plot Armor and your Defenses so that others who try to harm you via Tests have a harder time in doing so.

**All PCs start with 30 Pilot Points** (or PP) these serve as a form of currency outside of the game proper that may be spent however you wish as the Player to grant them additional talents and further separate them from the norm, by spending these points you may purchase Attributes, Plot Armor, Skills and Traits for your PC.

### Attribute and Skill Purchase Costs

Desired Item	First Purchase	Second Purchase	Third Purchase	Fourth Purchase	Fifth Purchase
Attribute	2 PP	4 PP	6 PP	8 PP	10 PP
Skill	1 PP	2 PP	3 PP	4 PP	5 PP

Modifiers to your **Attributes and Skills may only be bought up to five times for each individual Attribute or Skill**, and their cost depends on how many upgrades to the same Attribute or Skill you have already bought.

**Each purchase of a +1 to an individual Attribute or Skill is going to be more expensive than the last.** The first time you purchase a +1 to your Empathy Attribute, it will cost you 2 PP, the second time it will cost you 4 PP, and so on. This increase in costs **does not apply to other Attributes or Skills**, meaning that, as by the previous example, a +1 to Fitness would cost 2 PP and not 6 PP, because Modifiers to Fitness had not been purchased a priori.

If your Skill is a Specialized one, you may **purchase further Specializations for 3 PP apiece**, Skill Specializations **can only be purchased if the Skill is designated as Specialized at the time of the first purchase**, and Specializations after the first are **limited to a number equal to the Modifier in the individual Skill**. For example, with a +3 Modifier to your Electronics Skill you may have up to three Specializations in it.

### Plot Armor Purchase Costs

First/Second Purchases	Third/Fourth Purchases	Fifth/Sixth Purchases	Seventh/Eighth Purchases	Ninth/Tenth Purchases
1 PP	2 PP	3 PP	4 PP	5 PP

Ranks to your **Plot Armor may be purchased up to ten times for each individual type of Plot Armor**, and their costs, too, vary depending on how many purchases of Plot Armor have previously been bought.

Beyond the obvious difference in how they work, the obtaining of Plot Armor Ranks is identical to that of Attributes or Skills, and distinguishes between the three different types of Plot Armor in the same way that Attribute and Skill Costs do for their own advancement progressions.

### Trait Purchase Costs

Minor Trait	Medium Trait	Major Trait
2 PP	3 PP	4 PP

Individual Traits **can only be purchased more than once if they are marked as Specialized Traits**, and require a **different Specialization every time**. The default limit to how many Traits you can purchase during this step is **10 total Pilot Points worth of Traits**. Bare in mind that Traits are not generally purchasable after Character Creation.



## Boys, be Ambitious!

This table defines in rough and general terms what each modifier represents in terms that are observable in-character for Attributes and Skills.

+0) Poor.

The character is either impaired in that skill or physical attribute or really doesn't have any scrap of natural talent in it.

+1) Mediocre.

The character is unexceptional, and, while they're not particularly bad, they're easy pickings for another who knows what they're doing.

+2) Good.

The character either has a solid natural talent or a considerable amount of training.

+3) Notable.

The character is distinguished from his peers for his abilities and likely practices at it often.

+4) Outstanding.

The character has achieved a level of capability only obtainable through impressive natural gifts and extensive practice.

+5) Masterful.

The character is renowned as one of the very best in the field and quite possibly anyone with an interest in it has heard of them.

A Modifier beyond 5 (only possible with considerable PP expenditure towards one's favored Attributes) is the stuff of legends, a genius the kind that is born once every several centuries, and such level of ability will earn its owner a place in the history books.

This does not count Attribute and Skill Modifiers added up together, a PC with Good Empathy and Masterful Diplomacy counts them both as separate for the purposes of these descriptions, even if in practical terms Diplomacy is always paired together with Empathy.

## Attributes

Attributes describe in very rough terms the raw talents of a character. They define a character's physical, mental and social capabilities and contribute to all Tests. Attributes are thus just as important, if not more so, than focused Skill training.

Attributes are measured by the Modifier they grant to Tests. Some Natures start with better Modifiers in some Attributes than others, and thus have a higher maximum potential regarding how good they may get at tasks involving the Attribute in question.

In summary, Attributes are representative of the character without being too open-ended, distinguishing the squints from the socialites and the gymnast from the surgeon.

## Fitness

Fitness measures a character's physical ability and helps him pull off feats of might and vigor, or simply impressive gymnastics.

The character with low Fitness is likely skinny, overweight, or handicapped in some way and not very good at traditionally macho heroics like cutting down faceless mooks, carrying princesses off into the sunset, or holding down their drinks.

The character with high Fitness lives a healthy life and is quite possibly being an exercise nut, or a professional that can make a living out of piledriving people into submission, or quite simply a guy who has to rely on his body a lot, such as an adventurous archeologist with or without fedora.

## Intellect

Intellect denotes whether a character is of reliable mental capacity or not. It is the attribute that contributes to a character's knowledge pool, worldly awareness, and creative thinking. Note that Intellect does not correlate directly to education, as a character might just have poor book learning abilities but still have enough wits to spare in tricking everyone around him.

Generally speaking, however, those with low Intellect tend to barely know enough to get by, though they may or may not genuinely believe that magnetism is an act of religious portent.

Characters with high Intellect are much more critical and objective in their views, and usually like teaching others, approaching the world as if they were tenured Professors. They could also just as well consider knowledge a valuable currency, worth collecting for the power it can hold over others.

## Empathy

Empathy helps a character perform well socially. The empathic character can tell exactly who he should talk to, how to talk to them, and surprisingly has the tendency to make more friends than enemies.

The low Empathy character is a mix of brash, oblivious and annoying, leaving it up to the player to choose his or her own brand of poison. Those of lowly manners tend to either be easily led by people better endowed at the social arts or act like manchildren to the point others would rather ignore them.

On the other hand, you have the high Empathy character: savvy at social-fu and very likely a person of many friends with just as much influence as himself, or just an extremeable likable guy who those around him can't help but pour their life stories out to.

## Defenses

Defenses are not something you can buy, but instead something you derive from your Attributes. Along with Plot Armor, Defenses keep you safe from other people trying to injure or do you harm in various ways.

Defenses are split into **Physical Defense, Mental Defense, and lastly Emotional Defense**, and you obtain their value from adding your **corresponding Attribute together with your current number of Genre Points** - which start at three.

The more your character develops and contributes to the game, the harder it is to hurt them. The details on how Damage works will be explained later.

### Plot Armor

All PCs have Plot Armor to mark how resistant they are to outside influences, it comes in three categories.

Whenever any harm is done to your character, you are dealt Damage. **Damage can be physical, mental, or emotional** in nature, and each type attacks one of the types of Plot Armor: **Grit, Drive, and Wisdom, all three corresponding in the same order.**

Your Ranks in each type of Plot Armor signify how much Damage you can take in each category before you go down fighting the good fight. An in-depth explanation of how Damage works can be found later in the book.

**Plot Armor is measured in Layers, of which every Character has four.** Each PC's respective **Ranks are the measure of how much individual Layers of Plot Armor can take** before breaking, and all Layers have the exact same value. When you take Damage of some kind you will **remove a number of points from one of the Layers**, moving on to the next one once it is out of points. Having fewer Layers gradually makes you weaker and once the fourth and last Layer is gone you are done.

Do not erase your Rank! Any Damage dealt is not permanent, and will heal with time. Only change the number to the left of your Rank, reducing it by the appropriate amount.

### Grit

Grit is a combination of physical resilience, sharp senses, and the inner fortitude to ignore that which would put lesser men (and women!) down. Grit makes the difference between being able to stand up again after going toe to toe with a mob and collapsing to your knees – or never beating them in the first place.

A character with high Grit is strong of body, and also proof that true strength comes from pure confidence - in the self and others.

A character with low Grit is frail and wimpy, and usually lacks a well groomed beard or other manly features (women can make up for lack of facial hair through the simple addition of a badass leather jacket.)

Grit helps a character resist diseases, toxins, attempts to get past him or her unnoticed, and other people trying to punch the daylight out of them.

### Drive

Drive protects the mind from the tricks and strategies employed by others trying to confuse or make the character lose control of themselves. It also shields their mental health from things that would leave another, lesser man, terrified or insane, and when a Character confronts interstellar monsters on a daily basis they might need that more than they might initially guess.

Characters with high Drive are not only aware of how it is important to keep one's head cool in the face of danger but can also stop their body from acting on its own, or more disturbingly to someone else's tune. Those not so fortunate in mental fortitude often walk into traps without realizing it, and lack the self-control needed to stand firm in the face of mind-shattering abominations from beyond the final gate.

Drive is the applicable Defense when partaking in a battle of wits, like chess, or metaphorical chess, or when a threat to a Character's mental integrity makes itself present, generally in the form of traumatizing events.

### Wisdom

Wisdom contributes to a character's composure and morale by helping them keep their feet on the ground against attempts made to fool, scare, or sway them into doing something not in their best interests.

A character with Wisdom understands others, and can see through them to their motives, and is also smart enough to distinguish when they are outright being fed a male bovine's feces. Characters with low Wisdom will fall for e-mail scams and are led along by their noses.

To summarize, Wisdom is there to help a Character avoid succumbing to the silver tongue of those that want them to stray from their path of choice.

### Knowing Where to Hit

You will notice that there is a certain degree of overlap between what the Defenses may shield you from, and a person with convincing arguments might be able to twist events so as to make it seem that they should be allowed to defend against anything using their strongest Defense and toughest Plot Armor.

The rules are open-ended in their interpretation and application for the sake of cinematic gameplay, but in case of doubt Fitness-based Offensive Tests are resisted with Physical Defense, and deal Damage to Grit. Tests keyed off of Intellect are Mental in nature and attack Drive, while Emotional Defense and Wisdom are what prevents those pesky Empathy-fueled Tests from being your bane.



## Skills

Skills are the combination of the knowledge and training in a specific field a character has. Being more narrow in focus than Attributes, they define a character's areas of expertise to fair greater extent.

A Character that attempts a Test using a Skill they have a Modifier of +0 with is considered to be untrained and **suffer a Disadvantage when using said Skill.**

At the time of purchasing a Skill for the first time it may **be selected as a Specialized Skill.** This represents a greater than normal focus on the part of the Character to improve their know-how in one of the particular uses of a Skill, but at the cost of underperforming with other, more general uses.

To Specialize, you must choose one of the various Specializations under the skill's entry - or make your own with the GM's approval. **Specialized Skills gain an Advantage with Tests made under the domain of their chosen Specializations, but suffer a Disadvantage the rest of the time as if they were untrained** - though they still gain the benefit of their Modifiers.

Further Specializations in the Skill may be bought for an additional 3 PP.

If you do not like the Skills from the list, then you may make up your own and discuss with the GM what areas of expertise this new Skill would cover. Examples of such Skills would be some of the sciences covered by Academics that do not have an obvious skill for their applied use, and Skills devoted to individual ways to make a living.

Keep in mind not all custom Skills are viable in every campaign. A Skill for the sole purpose of being a successful shop owner is not going to be very (or at all) useful in a game based on the Wagner without some creative thinking. You may only create one custom Skill for your character.

For the purposes of being a Gear Actor, no Skill is needed, as their piloting ability is integrated into the statistics of the Gear. Your expertise handling a sword or being the best jet fighter pilot around won't help your Gear piloting ability. Since GGG wants to represent the Mecha Genre as a whole and there are a myriad of ways in which you can control Mecha, GGG has separated a character's Intermission and Operation mechanics entirely and left it up to the user's imagination how they are linked.

## Athletics

Encompassing one's physical fitness and training, athletics applies to all those situations in which a considerable amount of physical prowess is required, as well as knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the human body. The character trained in Athletics is not going to be flat-footed when he finds himself chased by assassins and in need to climb a wall in a hurry, swim across a river, or long-distance jump from one rooftop to the next.

Athletics Tests almost always use the **Fitness** Attribute, though calling upon the theory of phys-ed will require **Intellect** instead.

### Possible Specializations:

Bodybuilding, Climbing, Swimming, Throwing, Triathlons.

### Possible Advantages:

Being on stimulants, high performance bike, playing on your 'home turf.'

### Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to climb a sheer slope, running around debris, swimming against the current.

### Sample Tests:

Jumping between rooftops (DN 5), a foot chase (Opposing Test), crossing the English Channel (DN 15).

## Academics

The academic is a character who has achieved a higher level of education than the norm and is familiar with the scholarly lifestyle. Academics corresponds to rolls made to research a subject, solve a mathematical problem, properly appraise an antique, and so on. Take note that a high Modifier in Academics does not necessarily mean the character is older than others, he could simply have actually paid attention and retained what he learned in school, in addition to reading a book or two. Take note this is for purely theoretical knowledge, and applying it will usually require the use of another Skill - a psychologist needs people skills, such as Diplomacy, and not just book learning to get others to open up for therapy, for instance.

Academics will use the **Intellect** Attribute for all Tests barring the most exceptional and unlikely of circumstances

### Possible Specializations:

Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Social Sciences, Formal Sciences, Applied Sciences.

### Possible Advantages:

Access to a government database, campus library, or a great internet search engine.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to research an unusually obscure topic, doing complex math without a calculator, identifying an object in very poor condition.

### Sample Tests:

Identifying a strange animal (DN 5), diagnosing an illness (DN 10), deciphering an ancient text in a forgotten language (DN 15).

## Craftsmanship

Maybe you're an excellent painter, or the fastest mason alive, or perhaps the long lost son of MacGyver. The craftsman is able to create and repair small physical objects with the genius necessary to accomplish the feats at a greater scale, such as in architecture or engineering. Craftsmanship related Tests are usually Extended in nature.

Craftsmanship uses **Empathy** to Tests when creating a work of art, requires **Intellect** when working on complex mechanical plans, and **Fitness** when doing simple routine work like fixing up a broken table.

### Possible Specializations:

Carpentry, Chemistry, Cooking, Demolitions, Poetry.

### Possible Advantages:

Quality ingredients, a reference library, specialized equipment.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Distracting noises, an improvised work area, terrible base materials.

### Sample Tests:

Building a tree house (DN 5), repairing your own Gear (DN 10), composing an epic Pulitzer-award piece (DN 20).

## Combat

The character is trained in the many ways in which one can make someone else come back home with a bruise, or worse. Combat represents brute strength, well-honed marksmanship, or even practical knowledge of strategy and tactics depending on the. Two people engaged in a fisticuff will use Combat to determine the winner, but so will two generals trying to control their troops more effectively than the other.

Fighting generally benefits from **Fitness** rather than **Intellect**, however the more theoretical uses of Combat will use the latter instead.

### Possible Specializations:

Chess, Gentlemen's Duels, Revolvers, Strategy, Swordsmanship.

### Possible Advantages:

Being on stimulants, attacking from surprise, attacking from the high ground.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Taking on someone armed while unarmed, shooting targets under cover, shooting while you are trying to drive a vehicle.

### Sample Tests:

Attacking another with a physical weapon (DN Physical Defense), engaging another in a chess duel (DN Mental Defense), breaking down a door (DN 5).

## Deceit

Knowledge in nothing less than the art of bluffing, the combination of fast-talk, body language, convincing lies, and a fair degree of acting skill. Its uses are, thus, broad in scope from pretending to be someone else to seducing a hapless millionaire into marriage. Note that putting up an act that doesn't actually do anything but get other people's attention is the domain of the Presence skill instead. Deceit involves actively trying to get something out of someone rather than amused or confused looks at the idiot running his mouth.

Deceit generally uses **Empathy**, though **Intellect** can apply in the case of more elaborate and impersonal scams such as forgery.

### Possible Specializations:

Bluffing, Disguises, Forgery, Intimidation, Seduction.

### Possible Advantages:

Victim is desperate for what you have to offer, impersonating your identical twin, conning someone full of themselves.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Your face was on the news recently as that of the culprit, faking an accent in a language you barely know, trying to fool a wide audience.

### Sample Tests:

Convincing a guard that you just forgot your ID, running a pyramid scheme scam, intimidating another with empty threats (All DN Emotional Defense).

## Dexterity

The gymnastics of Dexterity employ flexibility and hand-eye coordination over standing power and might, being a much better Skill of choice for pickpocketing, juggling and tumbling out of harm's way than it is to trying to punch someone in the face. You use Athletics when you want to run a marathon, but Dexterity for a quick sprint; similarly enough you use Athletics to lift and push an obstruction out of your way but Dexterity to simply jump over it.

Dexterity always is paired with the **Fitness** Attribute since making backflips can not be an act of social savvy or mental acuity.

### Possible Specializations:

Acrobatics, Escapism, Juggling, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing.

### Possible Advantages:

An object easy to palm, quality breaking and entering tools, target is distracted.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Handling large objects, restrictive clothing, watchful paranoid eyes on object of choice.

### Sample Tests:

Diving for cover when a firebreak breaks out (DN 5), quickly stealing a handbag (DN Physical Defense) cracking open a state of the art safe (DN 15).



## Diplomacy

You're an able negotiator and can help people solve matters peacefully, when possible. Diplomacy expresses a sincere desire to win someone over. It can be used to calm down an angry person, rally a crowd to follow your lead, or seduce someone you fancy, but the interest in doing so must be genuine.

Diplomacy almost always uses **Empathy**, though **Intellect** may be used to drone on about exactly why you are right, and **Fitness** could be applied to demonstrate why others would want to be on good terms with you, for their own good of course. The first alternative is harder to pull off, however, and the second is just as likely to cause you additional trouble rather than help.

### Possible Specializations:

Etiquette, Hagglng, Intimidation, Peace Talks, Seduction.

### Possible Advantages:

Target is easily bribed or blackmailed, the other person trusts or fears you.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to sweet talk multiple people at once, convincing someone who dislikes you, terribly inappropriate clothing.

### Sample Tests:

Getting a few free drinks from someone you just met, making an emotional appeal to the jury, negotiating for a cease-fire (All DN Emotional Defense).

## Electronics

Electronics as a Skill distinguishes those who not only know how to use equipment and gadgets electronic in nature, and who are also able to learn how to use new tools as they go, from the masses that still treat them as if they were powered by gnomes inside. You may use Electronics as a replacement for other Skills by having a computer do all the work for you, within reason, but doing so will take more time than if you did so yourself, for the most part.

Unless you're using said equipment to communicate with someone else - in which case you would Test **Empathy** - Electronics is an **Intellect** based Skill.

### Possible Specializations:

Artificial Intelligence, Communications, Computer Hardware, Hacking, Military Technology.

### Possible Advantages:

Access to a supercomputer, task is easily automated, excellent internet connection.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Computer is old or otherwise subpar, the task is tedious and the computer easily screws it up if left on its own, slow internet connection.

### Sample Tests:

Looking up simple information (DN 5), hacking past the system that another is guarding (DN Mental Defense), cracking an algorithm to figure out a killer's pattern - if any (DN Mental Defense).

## Investigation

The investigator is a gatherer of information and the sifter of that which is true or useful from that which is noise or a lie, not only noticing physical things that others don't but also intuitively knowing that something isn't quite what it seems. You may use Investigation to try and find a secret passageway in the creepy mansion, or figure out that the blood found at the murder scene does not match that of those who were allegedly present, or bar-hop asking if people have seen a particular missing child. It is important to note that trying to get information out of people with Investigation is done via manipulative methods, and is therefore rather different from using Diplomacy to do so, in which the character is straightforward.

Investigation uses **Fitness** when it comes to being aware of your surroundings and noticing physical clues via careful scrutiny, **Intellect** for an in-depth study of evidence already present, and **Empathy** to interrogate or otherwise seek information from others.

### Possible Specializations:

Contact Calling, Crime Scenes, Dream Analysis, Interrogation, Puzzles & Riddles.

### Possible Advantages:

Unrestricted access to area, gear and databases, a team to help you notice things or bounce ideas off of.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Subjects are unwilling to aid you, looking for impossibly small objects or clues, dealing with planted evidence.

### Sample Tests:

Fishing for simple information from your list of contacts (DN 5), searching for well hidden or disguised items (DN 10), getting someone to speak by tricking or intimidatin them (DN Emotional Defense).

## Machinery

This Proficiency is for operating various forms of technology that aren't electronic in nature but still require someone to keep an eye or to operate them. It may also be used for driving, piloting or otherwise controlling non-Gear methods of transport.

While Machinery is arguably less useful in scope than Electronics, though they are used similarly, it is a lot more arguable that computer programming is useless in the face of a tank.

Machinery depends on **Intellect** the majority of the time and with most equipment, but it is a **Fitness**-based Skill when handling vehicles.

### Possible Specializations:

Armored Fighting Vehicles, Clocks, Dungeon Traps, Engineering, Industrial Machines.

### Possible Advantages:

A concept model, luxury or otherwise high quality item.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Driving through unhelpful terrain, item is in poor condition.

### Sample Tests:

Tailing, escaping, or being in pursuit of another vehicle (Opposing Test), operating a simple assembly machine (DN 5).

## Presence

Sometimes all you want is to make sure you get people's attention, Presence does exactly that. When you want to impress others with a performance of song, fast talk, or to make sure people are listening to the elaborate speech you wrote you will want to use Presence.

Presence will receive full benefits from **Empathy** the grand majority of the time, with **Intellect** only being applicable for trying to confuse people with the abuse of jargon or buzzwords, and **Fitness** being only useful for minor tricks of athletics.

### Possible Specializations:

Carousing, Greek Drama, Playing the Guitar, Speeches, Technobabble.

### Possible Advantages:

Rehearsed previously, appreciative public, plenty of money to make merry with others.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Terrible ambience, poor quality microphones or other such equipment, unfriendly public.

### Sample Tests:

Distracting others with blatheromancy (DN Emotional Defense), performing a very difficult piece (DN 15).

## Generalists and Specialists

There is one subtle aspect of Mecha fiction - and most fiction in general - that does not often agree with reality itself: the portrayal of skillsets.

In the Mecha Genre, most Characters are masters of the field that they focus in, to a ridiculous degree. A person who is "good at sports" will be good at all of them at once, the team's smart guy is an omni-scientist who is a master of every field of applied and theoretical sciences, and no one bats an eye when a painter is so good at 3D modeling that she can recreate the entire Louvre in just a few minutes.

Of course there are exceptions, soldiers that undergo training are not taught how to fire just a single kind of gun without ever touching on how unarmed or melee combat works, but in most scenarios this is not how real people work. A chef is not a master of demolitions, a samurai is not a marvel gunman, and a chessmaster is not going to be commanding armies like a general.

An option to choose between both kinds of skill sets is thus presented. You may keep the Generalist approach, which is the default, and enjoy all the benefits of an absolutely preposterous level of talent with any chosen Skill **OR** you may choose to use Specializations and be even better at your chosen area of expertise but have it harder in other subsets of it for the sake of an unique Concept or, well, simple realism.

## Stealth

Like a true ninja, the stealthy character is not just adept at the art of 'how not to be seen,' but is also capable of being seen and yet remaining unnoticed. Stealth is used to camouflage and hide oneself from the eyes of others as well as to shadow another and conceal one's presence in a crowd. The character with Stealth cannot just disappear from another's perceptions without actually hiding first, just to note.

Stealth is a **Fitness** based Skill, for obvious reasons, and it would require an unusual scenario for that to change. Oftentimes, Stealth is used in Mixed Tests first before the action that is attempted to be taken stealthily.

### Possible Specializations:

Camouflage, Crowds, Shadowing, Silent Movement, Smuggling.

### Possible Advantages:

Poor lighting, distracted target, soundless environment such as a vacuum.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Distinguishing clothes, noisy equipment such as body armor, paranoid target.

### Sample Tests:

Sneaking up on someone (DN Physical Defense), the ol' ace in the hole (DN 5).

## Survival

Survival is a broad skillset representing a talent to fend for yourself without many of the commodities of modern life, from knowing what to eat and where to sleep to being able to find your way out of a maze and staying on the good side of wild beasts. Far less crucial but undoubtedly more entertaining uses of this proficiency involve PC's fixing themselves something to eat as punks without any Modifiers in this can potentially give themselves food poisoning.

Survival is usually related to **Intellect**, though if it is used to pacify animals will use **Empathy**.

### Possible Specializations:

Animal Handling, Foraging, Hunting, Meteorology, Navigation.

### Possible Advantages:

Domesticated animals, camping equipment, personal in-depth knowledge of the area.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Hungry or scared animals, no equipment whatsoever, unknown area.

### Sample Tests:

Finding food and water (DN 10), pacifying animals (DN Emotional Defense), figuring out the weather for the immediate future (DN 5).



## Traits

Further down the specialization spectrum you have Traits, focusing on what your character does with his or her life or the natural gifts independent from training that they have always had. Traits are classified as either Minor, Medium, or Major, and this classification corresponds to the overall utility of the Trait in question, though many Minor or Medium Traits do things that Major Traits don't.

It is important to note that **many Traits only make sense when taken at Character creation**, and as such the GM may disallow from taking them later on without coherent justification - a character could become Alluring in the middle of a Season due to facial reconstruction, for instance, but they cannot become beautiful just *because*.

Many Traits grant Advantages to specific circumstances, some are cheaper than a Specialization in a Skill, the better ones are generally more expensive.

It is important to note that natural gifts cannot substitute proper training nor can amateurish specialized training properly prepare you for all potential occupational hazards, and as such a Trait will not have its potential maximized without an accompanying Skill. Except for Specialized Traits, you may not take the same Trait multiple times.

**Certain Traits are (Specialized)**, these require you to choose a singular topic for them to focus in when you buy them and are very similar in function to Specialized Skills. **These Traits may be taken multiple times**, but every time you must choose a different Specialization for them.

Much like with Skills, it is possible you may want to possess one that is not present in this book. Should that be the case, present an alternative Trait to your GM using those presented here as a guideline, and they might allow it if it fits the campaign scenario and doesn't make anything else obsolete.

**This should, in most circumstances, only be for Specialized Traits that grant Advantages or negate a Disadvantage during certain circumstances that do not involve Gears.** Again, more than one of these or getting too crafty with a request is likely going to get raised eyebrows for trying to make too much of a special snowflake character - I'm sure you've heard the term Self Insert Mary Sue before, don't tempt people to misuse it more than they already do.

## Minor Traits

### Animal Person

You have the good fortune of being generally liked by the animal kingdom, and they cooperate with you easier than they do for other people.

Usually seen in animal trainers and a veterinarian or two, take note that while this makes handling domesticated (or domesticable) animals a simple task, trying to make friends with a swarm of angry wasps about to murder you remains impossible.

All Empathy-based Tests are at an Advantage when trying to influence the behaviour of applicable animals.

### Common Sense

You are fortunate enough to possess that which is the most uncommon of all senses, making you question things that other people take for granted and enabling you to make well-grounded decisions on your feet.

A number of times per Episode no higher than your Intellect the GM may discreetly inform you that you are about to act on an idea that is not very well thought-out or give you a clue as to where you should go next if you are stumped for ideas. You should probably pay attention when he does that.

### Intimidating

You're scary. Maybe it is the way you look at people or your unnerving voice, or perhaps you just look the part of a murderer. Fortunately, a scared target is more likely to do what you want... usually.

It is also increasingly more likely that it will get you into trouble the more you use it, and God forbid you try to convince someone you don't want any trouble and fail the Test.

Anyway, attempts to make people afraid of you (generally with the Diplomacy Skill) are at Advantage.

### Jaded

You are largely desensitized to things that others would find shocking or worse, and you've probably had more than your fair share of awful circumstances; cynicism and nihilistic life views are complementary but not obligatory.

Tests made to frighten or revulse you are at a Disadvantage.

### Make Do

You are used to working without proper equipment and making the best of what you've got, little as it may be, and are better suited to improvising than most.

You may negate up to one Disadvantage from Tests using improper tools or no tools at all.

### Performer (Specialized)

A performer makes an impression on people by clearly expressing something he or she has rehearsed, generally for the purpose of entertainment, such as a dazzling the stage with a dance.

What this actually means is that you are trained in a routine (or several) for a specific kind of performance, and are at an Advantage when Testing Presence with it.

#### **Possible Specializations:**

Beethoven, Celebrity Impersonations, Shakespeare, Stand-Up Comedy, Swan Lake.

### Polyglot

Though the world at large still uses the English Language, the benefits of being able to speak multiple languages in an era of worldwide communication are not to be underestimated.

Select a number of additional languages besides your starting one no higher than your Intellect to be fluent in, you can speak all of them with basic literacy comparable to a moderately educated native. When you increase your Intellect further, you may choose additional languages to learn.

### Streetwise

When people have business in a shady part of town, it sure comes in handy to have someone know the how and why of life on the streets, its perils and resources, and its rules and jargon.

In case you haven't figured it out yet, this Trait makes you that person. Tests made to maneuver, investigate or somehow make use of seedy places are at an Advantage.

### Superior Immune System

There is something to be said of people who are able to drink rat poison as if it were a light drink, and, while repeated attempts to intoxicate you will be successful, chances are your titanium stomach and strong liver haven't ever allowed you to suffer from a bad hangover, and you probably don't even remember the last time you caught the flu.

All Tests to resist diseases or drugs, whether recreational or not, are at an Advantage.

### Unshippable

Many are the weaknesses of the flesh, but despair not! For you have been blessed with either being completely oblivious, a very devout chaste person, or simply too awesome for this crap.

All attempts made to seduce or emotionally appeal to you based on sexual attractiveness are at a Disadvantage.

## Medium Traits

### Criminal Mind

They say it takes one to know one, and while you don't necessarily have to be **THAT GUY** to others in order to think like a total jerkface, you probably are more practically minded regarding people than you'd openly admit, in addition to being well versed in the ways of manipulation.

You may substitute Intellect with Empathy when in a mental competition with someone else, such as playing chess, trying to hack each other's computer, and so on.

### Danger Instinct

Better safe than sorry. Some call it gut instinct, others call it attention to detail, and while there are those that would go as far as to call it paranoia, you don't really care what it's called as long as it continues to keeps you in one piece.

You place all who would try to catch you off-guard at a Disadvantage automatically, such as someone following your footsteps while you are shopping for groceries or someone writing a fake invitation to a ball in hopes of luring you into a trap. Remember your mantra: better safe than sorry.

### Decadence

The majority of people underperform while under the influence - this is clearly not the case for you.

For as long as you are clearly drunk, you may choose to forego the Disadvantage usually gained from such state and instead gain an Advantage to any Fitness or Empathy-based Test a number of times per Episode no higher than your Fitness or your Empathy, whichever is higher.

### Expert Driver (Specialized)

Though no more than one Rank in Machinery is required to know the basics of driving, it is a wide gap that makes the difference between being able to safely get a car to work and pulling stunts for a living.

The Expert Driver has mastered one certain favorite vehicle of theirs to the point it might as well be considered an extension of their body, and gain an Advantage when behind the wheel, joystick, or what have you.

#### **Possible Specializations:**

Alpine A310, PX-03, Mach 5, Swordfish II, Galaxy Express 999.



### Gamer (Specialized)

You've got a competitive hobby you're devoted to like a catholic is to sunday mass, and an ingenious knack for figuring out things related to it. Maybe you're just good enough at playing chess, poker or trading card games to make a living from tournaments, but maybe your talents will be useful elsewhere.

Who can say when the President is going to need someone in his cabinet well versed into the dietary habits of the classic mythological Manticore?

Apply this Trait when experience with your obsession of choice would give you an Advantage or when you want to, well, play it.

#### Possible Specializations:

Cat's Cradle, Chinchirorin, Dungeons the Dragoning 7th Edition, Super Gear Wars, Texas Hold'em.

### Hard Work and Guts

It truly is a wonder to behold the power of human determination, of performing at one's best when under the worst amounts of pressure, of rising to meet a challenge when no one would expect you to overcome the odds. But that is not to say you are immune to the world-ending pain of having a chunk of your gut hanging outside your body, to the most harmful of illnesses or venoms clouding your vision and judgment, nor to the crushing despair of seeing everything and everyone you love be reduced to ashes.

No, for you are not impervious, but instead you choose to continue fighting, even if anyone else's body would have long given up.

A number of times per Episode up to your Fitness you may select any Disadvantage you are suffering from and ignore it until the end of the current Scene.

### Jack of all Trades

You're a real Johnny do-it-all. Maybe you're an exceptionally curious person, a voracious seeker of knowledge, or just a guy with too much free time to burn – possibly a combination of the three.

You do not suffer a Disadvantage to untrained Skill Tests.

### Nobody in Particular

If everyone has something they're good at, then you're good at not being yourself. You may be a master of disguise, have 'one of those faces' that are easy to forget, or somehow notable at not being noticed, and that's a talent that should not be overlooked.

Tests made to search for you, recognize you from a crowd, describe your appearance or otherwise look out for you are at a Disadvantage, while Deceive and Stealth Tests for the purposes of passing off as a completely normal, average Joe are at an Advantage.

### Scholastics (Specialized)

You have learned much about a particular science, whether it is exact or otherwise, and know not only how it works but more importantly how to actually put it to use.

While nothing stops you from making a 13 year old with a college degree or a 33 year old anthropologist that is also a bestselling author trained in several martial arts and knowing multiple languages, the GM is encouraged to try and instill some sense into you.

Apply this Trait to gain an Advantage when this higher degree of learning becomes relevant to a Test, you may now use the Academics Skill to apply this knowledge with Intellect as the key Attribute.

#### Possible Specializations:

Astronomy, Economy, Medicine, Philosophy, Psychology.

### Shrewd

You are politically minded, keeping track of the political scene in your own time, and you know who to call to get something done in the urban jungle of red tape.

Shrewd makes it easier for you to deal with the political process and bureaucracy, meaning that you can figure out who is backing a certain figure, which pocket needs a bill slipped into it, and just how illegal whatever mess you're in really is.

Tests made to manipulate or get past the machinations of institutions in your way are at an Advantage.

### Major Traits

#### Alluring

For one reason or another you are really popular with the opposite sex... and with those that bat for the other team, whether you want to be or not.

Maybe you have really good fashion sense, maybe it is your charming and effervescent personality, or perhaps it is your sexy voice.

Whatever the source of your charisma, you are at an Advantage when socializing with someone who could reasonably be attracted to your character.

#### Ally

An Ally is a single NPC that is a close friend, possibly another Actor with their own Gear, of a power comparable to the individual members of the Squad (in game terms, they're of the Rival Class).

Though this Ally might be a recurring character, allies are not part of the PC troupe for a reason: they have their own complications and motives, and, for every time that they lend you their help, they will expect you to give them a hand yourself.

Generally, allies help from the sidelines, but only rarely do they take part in Operations and stay all the way, on the off chance that they actually do directly help during battle they will probably come with extra baggage, such as enemies gunning for them that you also have to contend with.

## Genius

There is no limit to what your cunning is capable of. Indeed, sometimes you feel that you can do ANYTHING. Through inventiveness and careful analysis, you can quickly find novel approaches to old tasks, allowing you to get the most job done with the least amount of effort.

You may substitute Fitness or Empathy with Intellect for the purposes of a Test, and if successful you may not use this Trait again during this Episode.

## Leadership

People look up to you. You can inspire and motivate others even if they barely know you – maybe you've got a gift for words and a magnetic personality, or maybe you're just plain terrifying and people are more afraid of disappointing you than losing their lives.

A number of times per Episode up to your Empathy, you may Test Empathy and Diplomacy when performing a Help Test, and may apply its benefits to all your Allies instead of just to one of them.

## Living Database

Your memory is a thing of wonder that has been further cultivated by extensive learning through books, conversation, and other methods. Obscure names, dates and other minutiae rarely escape you and you are able to recall events with near-photographic detail.

If your character could reasonably have been exposed to some factoid or experienced something in the past that you as the Player don't know about or remember yourself, the GM should refresh your memory of up to a number of times no higher than your Intellect Modifier.

## Lucky

Look, a penny! Sometimes things just work in your favor, actually they do so pretty often, and for absolutely no immediately discernible reason. Were you born under a star of fortune? Are you the reincarnation of the most karmically fortunate person in existence?

These and sillier questions will not be answered anytime in the near future, but once per Episode you may reroll any one failed Test of your choice during an Intermission, and grant yourself an Advantage to the reroll.

## Martial Artist

You are your own weapon, like a real man (or woman), and as such you don't suffer a Disadvantage when fighting unarmed against an armed opponent.

Additionally, when you inflict physical Damage you may choose to disarm your opponent, and you will be armed, giving them a Disadvantage.

## Resourceful

You must've got some pretty good connections that owe you a ridiculous amount of favors, or a crazy amount of money, because you always know just who to ask to find the right tool for whichever job you need to do next, no matter how mundane or bizarre they are.

A number of times per Episode no higher than your Empathy you may ask the GM for any specific object and, if it isn't outright nonsensical in context, a friend of yours will let you "borrow" it.

## Weapon Expertise (Specialized)

There is a single category of weapons that you are a guru in, and you know everything there is to know about their craft, maintenance, use and history.

You could be an archery practitioner who's in it for the spiritual benefits or a very large Russian with a favorite machinegun, what matters is that when performing a Test relating to knowledge of, or when armed with this kind of weapon, you gain an Advantage.

Possible Specializations:

AK-47, Composite Longbow, Chemical Explosives, Katana and Wakizashi, Revolvers.

## Worrywart

Detail oriented and more than a little bit paranoid, you at least channel your neuroticism into practicing the age-old wise saying of living to fight another day, trying to always have a Plan B in case Plan A's a failure demands you scurry away to safety.

Worrywart applies to trying to get away from trouble rather than facing it head on, with Tests made to Escape being the primary use, at an Advantage.





## Tools of the Trade

What would a futuristic game be without dozens of technological gadgets, badass but slightly impractical weaponry, and vehicles that defy our knowledge of physics with their stunts? Well, it would be a simpler one, for starters.

Managing inventories is a task so slow that it is even a chore in computer games, where all it takes is a few clicks. Imagine how much of a chore it can be if the PCs have to go out and restock supplies every Episode, while managing their money and making sure the bills don't go unpaid. Worse, when it comes to buying mundane items, which computer or house or cell phone model should you go for? These are valid concerns in real life, but they will also rarely affect the game meaningfully.

On the other hand, the gadgets, weaponry and vehicles are pretty cool and worth the hassle in keeping track of them, so GGG seeks to balance realism and attention to detail with cinematics and simplicity.

Firstly, every PC with a stable income (such as those from Hiryu and Verne) are assumed to have a respectable income, enough to cover their basic needs and splurge on a few luxuries here and there. Furthermore, they are assumed to always have goods and services accounted for and available in their home – unless it is relevant to the plot that they don't have them.

Secondly, all equipment that fulfills a similar function is assumed to be the same for the purposes of the game mechanics. All cars drive the same by the rules of the game and all guns shoot the same by default. **Equipment only stop you from suffering a Disadvantage to your Skill Test** on tool-requiring tests – unless they are special tools, but more on that later.

Thirdly, any Character trained in a Skill (moreso if they are Specialized) are assumed to have what they need to do their jobs as far as more ubiquitous equipment goes. A medic should have access to at least a first aid kit, a computer technician to his laptop, and a stunt driver should have one or more cars. In case of doubt, address with your GM just what your PC has on hand or can request.

Equipment worth writing out in your PC's character sheet is **purchased with PP as Traits**. These might also be obtained (albeit temporarily) by using applicable Traits like Ally or Resourceful. **Unless specified as a Minor or Medium item, all equipment is considered Major for the purposes of its cost.**

Equipment may be purchased after character creation unlike other Traits with only one minor restriction: a Character is assumed to possess enough money for **no more than 10 PP worth of Equipment per Episode Arc**. Of course, Equipment may also be obtained through roleplaying and the use of Traits such as Resourceful, but it is likely going away at the end of the Episode in that case. It either breaks, goes missing, has to be legally returned to its owner, or something to that effect **unless you pay for your Equipment in PP, it is not going to be a permanent feature.**

If certain items are consumed or useless after being used and you have spent PP to obtain them, you may acquire further copies at no PP cost.

### Money, Money, Money!

So you want to actually deal with currency as a thing to manage, more power to you. We don't present hard rules for the earning and use of money, but we do have a general guideline that should help in eyeballing prices and converting coinage from modern standards or between factions.

One Universal Reserve Note equals one American Dollar.  
One Nobel equals five Notes.

One Kurogane equals a hundredth of a Note, one Shirogane equals a tenth of a Note, and one Hagane equals a Note.

Remember, however, that Verne no longer deals with Earthlings (officially, at least) so this is more a representation of how it used to be between the UEF and the SSA. Hiryu coins have no value outside of it – hence their much lower exchange rate when compared to Notes.

### Masterwork Tool

You are usually considered to have what you need to use your Skills, but it is possible to acquire inherently superior equipment that makes things so much easier.

This can be a masterwork bastard sword that has been passed down from generation to generation within your family without losing its edge, a closet full of clothing for every occasion, or simply a book that serves you as an inspirational muse to craft your poetry.

All Tests made to perform a task this item would be helpful towards are at an Advantage for as long as you have it on hand.

### Personal Facility

Now you too can have your own office and staff of competent assistants, secret basement laboratory, or maybe just a very comfortable couch with custom-made joysticks that enhance your leetsauce videogame skills!

You are free to design what this Facility is for and what it contains, within reason. Having a mountaintop skull-shaped fortress will certainly require more than just this Trait, which may or may not be “a miracle” depending on how lenient your GM is.

For as long as you are within this Facility, any Tests related to the task it was designed to facilitate are at an Advantage.

## Alternative Items

Tools and Facilities cannot possibly cover every conceivable meaningful item your PC could own, but they do represent a very wide range of them. Should you wish to complicate things further, then you may discuss with your GM the possibility of modifying them.

You may want to make the bonuses more conditional to lower their cost, but you could also attach extra abilities to such items. Since you cannot increase the cost of these Traits further, then you will have to add a weakness to this item to act as a counterbalance.

Since it would be comically easy to stack a bunch of cool abilities together and give them weaknesses you don't really care about, all such items have to be approved by the GM. Use the examples here to help guide you.

## Minor Equipment

### First-Aid Nanomachines

Soldiers often cannot afford to wait until a field medic has made their way to them, and the invention of fast-acting medical Nanomachines has single-handedly increased survivability rates by 40% since their inception and have since made their way into the civilian market. These Nanomachines come as an injection and may be applied to a wound for a variety of effects.

The use of First-Aid Nanomachines will make the user Test Fitness as a Healing Test. Repeated use of First-Aid Nanomachines in the same Episode are likely to have side effects, and a Failure to meet the DN will deal Damage to the patient equal to half the amount they missed the DN by.

### Omni-Counter

A ridiculously complicated and fidgety device that sacrifices simplicity for versatility. The Omni-Counter can detect energy emissions ranging from the ever popular Gygravagnite radiation to tracking motion and honing onto life signs with utmost precision. Really, pretty much anything that is invisible to the naked eye can be detected, you just need to be able to tell the darn machine what it is looking for – which is harder than it seems.

The use of an Omni-Counter is an Intellect and Electronics Extended Test that takes approximately one minute to finish, with a DN of 10 for vaguely gathering data in the immediate vicinity, and a DN of 15 for more precise readings.

## Rocket Shoes

Everyday running shoes equipped with a limited Maglev capability, feeling much like high tech roller blades. Once per Episode you can gain their benefits for the duration of the current Scene: gaining an Advantage to all movement speed-based Athletics and Dexterity Tests and giving you the ability to climb plain surfaces and go over surface level hazards, even running over the water's surface – though doing so will not be at an Advantage. Be careful, however, as a failure on any speed Tests with these activated means you are probably going to hurt yourself – half the amount you failed to meet the DN by is an acceptable guideline.

## Medium Equipment

### Body Suit

The Body Suit is the name given to the smaller and more practical versions of astronaut suits used these days by workers in the SSA. These are sealed and will protect the wearer from the dangers of vacuum, extreme heat and cold. They contain several hours' worth of air supply and the obligatory waste disposal system that you need to work in space for any length of time.

In addition to that, the Body Suit will also impair any attempts to harm the wearer Physically with a Disadvantage. The one problem with the Body Suit is that it places a Disadvantage on every Fitness Test due to how unwieldy it is.

### Primitive Weapon

Many folk practice with Weapons from ages gone, not due to their efficiency, but as a sport or even to help hone their minds – like most of the people from Hiryu. Even then, most folk these days actually take guns to their firefights, but not everyone does. These Weapons cover anything from swords to bows and do not gain an Advantage against any foes with modern superior armor - the kind that takes a Major Trait.

### Universal Key System

Not actually a key but a combination of a card that reads security codes and a device in the guise of a PDA to crack them open. An Universal Key System will grant an Advantage to bypassing electronic means of security. Take note that anyone with a modicum of security training can quickly recognize someone using them, no matter how casual they try to look like they swiped the card wrong and had to talk to someone on the phone at that precise moment.



## Major Equipment

### Anti-Gear Mines

Cunning always trumps brute force – or so many would like to think. Truth is, it is very difficult, but possible, to overpower a Gear without Gear-scale equipment. The preferred method by Guerilla units lacking in Gears to defend their territory is to employ powerful land mines and lure their enemies right on top of them.

Anti-Gear Mines may be detonated to deal 1d10 Damage to a Gear directly on top, and they deal 20 Damage to any Personal-Scale targets unlucky enough to be there. The blast radius covers just a single Distance's worth – a single square, hex, or equivalent.

You will need a very good reason to be allowed to have these for anything other than a case-by-case basis during Operations.

### Miniature Chemical Weapon

One of the most dangerous things a character could carry on themselves and extremely illegal, miniaturized, super-concentrated chemical weapons can poison an entire apartment room with the nerve gas contained in an earring, a watch, or other similar small adornment.

Once the gas is released, anybody who fails a straight Fitness Test with a DN of 20 will suffer Physical Damage equal to the amount they missed the DN by, and will continue to do so every Round for as long as they remain within the area of effect, requiring a Dexterity Test with a DN somewhere between 10 and 15 to get out of the deadly cloud, or until 1d5 Rounds have passed at which point the threat has dispersed.

It goes without saying that anybody found trying to craft or buy anything like this in the black market is going to be paid a visit by a number of very nice men, no matter the faction, and will be carefully monitored thereafter.

### Icarus-Class Powered Armor

This winged suit of armor is the mainstay of the Verne Military Police for those times when Nautilus-Class Gears or Danube-Class Boards would be too large and impractical, or simply overkill. It covers almost the entirety of the body, while still allowing for excellent mobility. The Icarus has limited flight capability, and is equipped with thrusters for 0-G environments.

In practical terms, it inflicts a Disadvantage to all Physical Offensive Tests against you and lets you fly, with enough power, for the length of a Scene, though you require a running start and considerable height and need to continuously move and may not take any sharp turns for the duration. This obviously opens up a lot of options and makes it difficult, if not outright impossible, to affect you with most kinds of Offensive Tests while you are up there. Gears are unaffected by this, being far more mobile and not to mention taller.

Without said preparation, the suit of armor is only going to give you an Advantage to Tests made to jump.

This sounds all fine and dandy, but Icarus suits cannot be legally bought. They are, after all, military grade equipment only available to a different faction than the one usually available to PCs. Furthermore, should proof of a single Icarus-Class being used by hands other than the ones meant to use it be made public, you can bet some investigation is going to be taking place.

The SSA does not want the eyes of the Federation or Outsiders looking their way, and anybody from the Guerilla who is found out to be in possession of an Icarus-Class suit or a derivative of them will likely find themselves between a rock and a hard place – or between being sacrificed for political reasons and outright being targeted by assassins.



## Dramatic Themes

Now that you know what your character is like and what they can do, having spent all of their PP, you need to take a step back and look at who they are, who they have been until now, and who they want to be in the future - or don't want to be. Through the following section you will need to figure out what defines your character, their wants and failings, their relationships and beliefs.

If you're the kind of guy that makes a character first and looks for a group later, then you should consider halting the process right now. The next step will be at the very least difficult to do without knowing what kind of game you will be in and what group of characters you'll play with, as a lot of the fun is figuring out what will make for the most fun group dynamics. Should you choose to proceed anyway, you have been warned.

Dramatic Themes, or just Themes, are the core of what your PC's life revolves around when off the battlefield, and sometimes during Operations too. They're not necessarily objectives, instead they're more like patterns, cliches, or leitmotifs that your PC will explore through the course of the Season, willingly or not.

Dramatic Themes come in three kinds: **Reasons are the PC's personal motivation, Typecasts are how your PC acts within their group, and Banes represent your PC's most fatal flaw**, you need one of each for your PC.

Whenever one of the three Themes creates conflict, contributes either to character development or to the larger plot, or simply helps make an otherwise boring Scene a fun one, **you are awarded a Genre Point for your efforts**. Genre Points can be used to activate special abilities during Operations called Genre Powers.

**You start with three Genre Points** and there is no upper ceiling for how many Genre Points you can stockpile. **You gain a Genre Point at the start of every Episode, and they reset back to three with a new Episode Arc.**

Sometimes a PC will earn a Point from their Theme on his or her own initiative, but often it will be instigated by the GM, other players, or be entirely unplanned and coincidental. Sometimes the character is not aware or agreeable to these developments, such as when confronting his or her biggest flaw and falling victim to it, but you as a Player get the points for going with it anyway.

Themes naturally change over time, a character's convictions pursued too strongly can become no different than vices and a weakness that is solved with the help of someone else turns into a bond between them. Other times, though, you just aren't having fun with your themes. If you don't like how the Themes you've chosen are playing out, you can change them after every Arc - think it over and give them a last chance before doing the change.

### Don't be a Drama Queen

There's so much fun stuff you can do and it sure is tempting to hog the spotlight and earn all those delicious Genre Points, right?

Don't. Everyone should have their time under the spotlight and if you're taking away time from everyone else the GM is encouraged not to reward you for it.

Generally, the GM should be generous with the first Genre Point awarded each Episode to every player, but unless the player is trying to get other people involved in developing their Themes, that first point should be the last.

Getting a second Genre Point should be done by developing a Theme different from the one you first scored a Genre Point with, while also helping others develop one of their own.

If that isn't enough for your darnn greedy self, then you're going to have to wow everyone at the table with your third Dramatic Theme to receive that third point.

To milk the most out of your Themes regularly you should try to choose some that will have plenty of chances to both contribute to the benefit of the group as well as complicate it for your own character for the entire run of Episodes, and it goes without saying you should not be afraid of making "mistakes" while playing your character if it will make things more interesting.

There is a fine line to keep watch of between interesting and annoying, however, a line that differs for every group. Communication is key to find out how much is enough.

Another good trick is to try and connect your own Themes them to other PCs or NPCs, Typecasts make this easier but you can use them for Reasons and Banes as well. Just make sure that you can earn Points from said Themes on your own initiative without requiring the other PC or NPC to seek yours out or to act first.





## Dramatic Reason

Just like every hero has their quest, every champion has their cause, so does every PC have their Reason. Your PC's goal is something that they care deeply about and strive hard to preserve, maintain, or change.

It can be a manifestation of an internal conflict, a code of conduct that is difficult to uphold, or a tangible goal the PC has in mind, ranging between simple and general or complex and specific as you deem fit.

Reasons can be like dreams, far out and distant from the PC's starting point, but, unlike a dream which might not be realistic in scope, the Reason is something the Pilot can actively pursue, consciously or not, and more often than not it is what drives them in life. Alternatively, your Reason might be something much mundane that they are very aware of. Constantly.

Discuss your idea for a Reason with the GM and arrange on something you would like your PC to be involved in pursuing or tangling with. You don't need to get too specific, just make sure you both understand what it is you want for the PC.

Gaining Genre Points via your Reason generally requires proactive behavior on the player's part, and it should be obvious to both player and GM when the Theme has done its job and the Genre Point should be provided.



## Sample Reasons

### Justice:

You act out of a deep personal sense of what is right and wrong. This may entail making a few enemies out of people you have no need to cross, resisting generous offers to look the other way, or even getting into trouble with your superiors or peers for following your convictions.

### Curiosity:

Your inquisitiveness overwhelms your sense of self preservation, leading you often into danger. This can range from walking into every obvious trap the GM ever lays to toying with things until they break.

### Expectations:

You are heralded with promises of achievements and would loathe to fall short of them. Sometimes you bite more than you can chew, and other times you have to do things you dislike or disagree with on a fundamental level.

### Protector:

You are an idealist and will fight for as long as you have to in order to keep your loved ones out of harm's way. The greater good is fine and all, in theory, but some people mean more than the world to you.

### Ambition:

You fully intend to expand your power and influence, and are willing to make sacrifices to do so. This power may be political, military or come in some other form, and chances are that you will leap at the chance to engross it.

### Mercenary:

You enjoy your job and the money that comes with it, in the look for fame and fortune and everything that comes with it. You do what you want, and pity to whoever gets in your way, nothing personal.

### Independence:

You are doing this simply because you are rebelling, like a teenager angry with mom and dad, whether this is your true calling or not is up in the air. You may find yourself helping people you supposedly despised because your faction of choice is going too far, or take the opportunity to go too far on them yourself now that you have the chance.

### Survival:

You do not actually want to do this, but complicated circumstances are forcing you into it, and you would very much prefer stepping out of the cockpit. You could be the first to retreat from battle, and may even attempt to get away from your appointed duty at some point.

### Vengeance:

You are seeking revenge for another - a person or a group - that has slighted you. You would gladly walk into a trap if it gives you a chance to settle the score, your own well-being is a secondary matter to making things even.

### Duty:

You firmly believe in your faction and what they stand for, and are honorbound to prioritize their best interests. Examples range from defending their name, to standing up for them against bad odds and even willingly taking the fall for them as a sacrificial pawn,

## Dramatic Typecast

Relationships are the lifeblood of any group, whatever form it is they take - people cannot just ignore each other and refuse to interact. That is boring. Furthermore, the PCs are tied to stay together for the sake of their mission, and the relationships that form from being forced into teamwork becomes their Typecast, a role or part they fulfill whether they like it or not.

Typecasts can be general in scope - the PC acts like a leader or hug box to everyone. But Typecasts can also be individual - the PC has a rivalry or a love interest. Such connections with NPCs are possible, but discouraged, important NPCs in the life of a PC should not take the form of Typecasts whenever it can be helped. Think of a role you would like to see your character act in and develop, or a relationship to preestablish and develop further.

Feel free to discuss it with the other players if you want to check whether it would be okay with them, or keep it secret and go for it anyway. Remember that a Dramatic Theme will get you Points as long as it is explored even if The PCs themselves don't like it!

All Typecasts develop at their own pace as the group evolves as a whole, and no one better than the players involved know when it has contributed to development, but the GM is at a right to veto the awarding of a Genre Point if nothing dramatic visibly happened.



## Sample Typecasts

### Authority:

You are - or think you are - a born leader, and will direct this troupe of unruly jerks to success even if it is the last thing you do. Chances are that you adopt a bossy tone with the rest of the PCs, and tell them what they should be doing more often than they'd like.

### Brotherhood:

You care for another PC and know them inside and out, always there to tell them what they need to hear and give them the helping hand they need. The other character may not necessarily appreciate this, but that does not stop you from doing what you have to do.

### Rivalry:

You feel an intense rivalry for a certain other PC, foiling her plans and proving your superiority makes every day that much more enjoyable. This may be a real feud or one that you play up for your own entertainment.

### Love:

You are quite simply charmed by the next PC, with all the corn that implies - and will be like a complete idiot for their sake. You can misunderstand their words and actions overreacting accordingly, or be a reasonable human being and deal with the troubles of commitment.

### Conciliatory:

You think everyone else is way too messy in what they're trying to do with each other, and work to make it so that everyone gets theirs. You are there when the rest of the group needs a mediator, but may end up feeling like a third wheel when there is not any conflict.

### Parental:

You take on a paternal or maternal role, alternating between nurturing and corrective as necessary to one other PC. You do not always like the things you have to do, and in those cases your protege probably likes them even less.

### Greenhorn:

You are the new guy on the team and will try waaaay too hard to impress everyone else so they stop seeing you as a rookie. Examples can include disobeying orders to show off how good you are on the more hotheaded side of the Theme or doing other people's work for them out of the goodness of your heart on a more responsible light.

### Troll:

You are an awful person that can't get enough of placing the rest in embarrassing situations and endlessly push their buttons. Whether it is by revealing embarrassing secrets, by showing up at the right time to kill the moment, or by playing practical jokes on others - you are never bored for long.

### Devotion:

You greatly admire another and will do your best to be like, help with anything they need, and defend the honor of your idolized role model. Bitter disappointment and crushed illusions not mandatory, but probable.

### Buttmonkey:

Someone has to bite the bullet and so the roulette happened to unfavor you, enjoy being the comedy relief that gets no respect. The GM has is probably going to make you a very sad clown at some point, you poor thing.



## Dramatic Bane

Achilles' Heel is perhaps more infamous than Achilles' own deeds, because sometimes great characters are defined by what dooms them more than what they achieve or how they relate to others. This crucial drawback is possessed by PCs too: it is called a Bane.

A Bane can be a general recurring personality trait, an observable physical handicap, an external factor that can complicate things for them, or an even more complex combination of factors. Consider what you think The PC's worst problem could be, and maybe even think about what is the worst ending their story could have, then discuss it with your GM to agree on how he's going to make your life that much harder.

Keep in mind that this is something you want brought up, so choose a Bane that you are comfortable roleplaying going through (or towards) a multitude of times.

Since Banes are generally brought up by the GM and not the player, whatever the Bane is, it should get the better of the PC whenever it comes up under an important situation. If it does not, the PC does not get a Genre Point.

By the same card, the Bane should not be invoked unless it is meaningful, because that is more likely going to annoy Players than encourage the roleplaying of three dimensional, flawed characters.



## Sample Banes

### Phobia:

You suffer from a crippling phobia that turns you into a gibbering cowardly mess. It can be a common like being afraid of spiders, or something more unique like the ocean itself, either way expect to battle a giant robot spider or to be shot down and drift along with the waves waiting for rescue.

### Misshapen:

You suffer from some type of physical deformity or disfigurement, making you quite unpleasant to look at. Chances are that this preemptively closes you down doors that would be more easily open for others.

### Haunted:

You are haunted, literally or figuratively by someone or something from your past. Maybe it is survivor's guilt driving you to drink, or perhaps you had a bad experience with a Cryptid and now you are seeing things that should not be slowly driving you mad.

### Prejudice:

You lack tolerance for a certain group of people and treat them with contempt, even when you know it isn't in your best interests to do so. You are not subtle about it either, and anyone who is open minded will probably be at odds with you on principle when said group is involved.

### Pride:

You are almost suicidally overconfident, which leads to situations where you are over your head. You never forget a slight, and make sure to pay your debts in humiliation.

### Disabled:

You suffer from a disability such as paraplegia which makes day to day life difficult. It goes without saying, this probably does not carry over to your ability to control a giant robot.

### Angry:

You have a short fuse and a tendency to break out into fits of anger at the smallest of provocations. At the very least, you really want to insult whomever has offended you to their face, and possibly more.

### Shy:

You are socially anxious and tend to withdraw from large groups of people. This may lead to the rest of the group probably running over you and your own voice not being heard, often to their own detriment.

### Kind:

You are too soft-hearted for the trials of war, and your pacifist tendencies will make you do something stupid eventually. You may go out of your way to save enemy lives, and the GM should reward you accordingly.

### Allergy:

You have a dangerous allergy, beyond simple hay fever, it can be an extreme aversion to cat fur or your equivalent of kryptonite. This may make everyday life more complicated than you like, or be one of those things that happen rarely but really set you back when they do.

## Genre Powers and Genre Points

Genre Powers are amongst your character's most powerful abilities, and are powered by nothing less than character development.

The use of a Genre Power is a tilt in the balance of the fight, such as a Gear having shielded itself with a hidden weapon from a deathblow, or improvising a new technique in a pinch that the enemy did not see coming, or even a dramatic speech that encourages battered allies to rise again, the point is Genre Powers are not to be taken lightly and should be used with care.

You start with the default three Genre Powers, plus three other Genre Powers of your choice from your Nature's list or from the Common Powers pool. Remember that **you start with three Genre Points**, so consider the costs of the ones you will take carefully.

### Genre Powers Format

#### Name of the Power

Speed: Genre Powers with a Speed of **"Called"** may be **used during the Beginning Phase**, while Instant Speed Genre Powers may be used at any time, even in response to an enemy's actions. If multiple genre powers are activated as a chain the last one to be activated is the first to take place, the second to last is the second to trigger, and so on until the first in is the last out. This is so that a Genre Power that is used as a reaction has an effect before what it is trying to react to gets to do so.

Cost: **To use a Genre Power you must spend an amount of Genre Points equal to this value at the appropriate time according to their Speed.**

Effect: What the Power proper does, **you may only use one Genre Power per Round**, so if you have used a Genre Power during your own Turn you may not use one during the enemy side's Turn. Furthermore, **you may not use the same Genre Power twice in one Operation.**

Description: Since there are no hard rules for how you may choose to interpret the effects of a Genre Power, instead each one of them has an example of how it may be applied in their description - but by all means go ahead and use them however you wish, and make it cinematic!

## Default Genre Powers

### Try Again

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: Reroll any one 1d10 Action roll and gain an Advantage to it, keeping the new result.

Description: Takashi swings, controlling the towering arms of the GTR, Gran Sword in hand. Time seemingly slows for a second, as he realizes his clumsy attack will contact the ground shamefully far from its mark. The sword rotates slightly in the air, the cutting blade now swinging towards his foe's side.

### Mid-Scene Upgrade

Speed: Instant

Cost: 2

Effect: Gain a new Upgrade or Weapon, you must pay the cost at the earliest opportunity after the Operation ends. If you would not be able to make the purchase in the future, for whichever reason, the GM may rule that you cannot gain that Upgrade or Weapon.

Description: Darren's Gear hits the ground again, hard. Above, the circling creature seems to laugh at his blade's inability to reach it as it readies to strafe him again. The engineers said it wasn't ready, but Darren's hand reaches for the small switch, screaming "TAU MISSILE."

### Not so Fast

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: Cancel the effects of an Enemy's Attack against another Ally of yours. If used after all relevant rolls have been made and resources spent, the effects are cancelled but the resources are still consumed.

Description: The Justice stops its speedy flight at the Wagner and draws its blade, looming menacingly over the Bridge. A split second before the Gear struck down, it was knocked off balance by swift kick to its mechanical gut, the repairs on Owen's Sunbuster finished in the nick of time for a speedy re-deployment and to save the day once more.



## Common Genre Powers

### Data Scanner

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Increase your Tension by 1. For the next three Rounds you may ask the GM a question about any one of your enemies once in each of your Turns, they must answer it truthfully. Example questions include: What is the Enemy's status? (Tension, Energy, Threshold), What are the Enemy's defenses? (Evasion, Armor, relevant upgrades), What are the enemy's offensive capabilities? (Weapons) and so on.

Description: Hilda rapidly took in the details. A BGM-003, which was a limited run of 8. 3 units confirmed destroyed, this must be one of the remaining five. Their backup graviton channels have an operational lifetime of two years due to their short tour of service. The nick on this unit's shoulder exposes its main channel.

### Determinator

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Restore a Maimed Area back to normal. This will not heal lost Threshold, only the status effect.

Description: Sarah's gear stands back up again. Its one intact arm stuffs the loose cabling back inside the hole in its hull. "Impossible!" says her mechanic. "There's no way the X-2 can continue functioning after that kind of damage!"

### Show some Mercy

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: The next instance of Damage dealt by you that would finish off someone else's Lethal Threshold Layer defeats them instead, causing the Core to eject and disabling it. Doing this successfully will increase your Tension by 1 and let you apply the benefits of this Power to any further attacks you make at your discretion, sans the Tension bonus

Description: Michael sliced the rifle and legs off yet another Gear. The effort is exhausting, but if he fights without care, he is no better than them.

### Called Shot

Speed: Instant

Cost: 2

Effect: The next time you would deal Damage to a foe this turn, you Maim them in an area of your choice as if you had broken through the Threshold Level. If this Threshold Level is destroyed, they are not Maimed again.

Description: Neither were fighting with weapons that could evaporate the other outright, but then that was common for him. He took the shot, his beam cutting the exposed hydraulics units between the chest plate and the shoulder, disabling the arm.

### Disarm

Speed: Instant

Cost: 2

Effect: After an attack made by an Enemy has failed to deal Damage to you, you may disallow that same Enemy from using that Weapon again until End of Operation.

Description: The beast's elbow opened to reveal the hidden flamethrower that had claimed so many of its previous opponents. Shohei was ready though, dodging its gout of fire, and slicing the weapon's handle off with one clean strike.

### Pep Up

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Restore the Threshold of any one target by 1d10.

This may not repair them past a lost Threshold Level.

Description: Tom opened comms with Annie. "Why are you pulling back?" He asked.

"My gear is damaged, nearly out of ammo, and I haven't eaten in 16 hours. I'm no good to anyone like this," she replied. "I will make you that paella you like so much," Tom promised. He really didn't even know how to cook, but just the POTENTIAL was enough.

### Almighty Champion

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: Restore all of your Threshold Levels to full. This will not undo any Maim to your Areas.

Description: Thanh watched the exhaust flares of the others recede into the immense structure. Their mission was vital to Earth. But despite often being mocked as cold-hearted, he'd chosen to stay here and protect Riya's downed Core. The wings of light of his Victory flared vividly. "YOU'LL HAVE TO HIT HARDER THAN THAT IF YOU WANT HER!"

### One in a Million Shot

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: Your next offensive Action ignores any and all defensive capabilities of your enemies, other than Evasion and Armor, or Upgrades that enhance those two, and gains an Advantage to the Accuracy and Penetration Test.

Description: "Corporal, Morrigan indicates that at this point a shot from your weapon impacted the target. At this point in time we believed it to have been surrounded by a Gravagne Field, making it effectively invulnerable. Now there was a hole in that field, but do you know how big it was?" "Big enough to fit the bullet I hit it with?"

### Live Another Day

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: You automatically retreat from the battlefield. This prevents any Damage that would have been dealt to you if used as a response to an attack.

Description: All the sensors were in the red, things didn't look good and Matt knew he had to bail out. The Penderecki hid behind an abandoned building and detonated all it had left to topple it and put a halt to its pursuers. When the dust settled, he was already gone.

### Love and Courage

Speed: Called

Cost: X

Effect: Choose a number of Genre Powers you possess with a total combined cost X or less and gain all of their benefits at once. This does not count as activating the powers individually.

Description: The entirety of the Glory squad surrounded the Actress. "You are one hundred years too early to match me." Patricia set the Revolution's output to overdrive and stood her ground.

### The Power of Genre

Genre Powers can do some crazy things, and the ones that can be used Instantaneously can get really tricky with their uses, leading to all sorts of potential interpretations on just how lenient the wording is.

As a rule of thumb, if a Genre Power reads like it wants to be used at a particular time – up to and including the limbo between the roll of a die and the resolution of its effects, it should do just that.

Genre Powers are there so that losses can be turned into victories. If Players can't agree between interpretations of a Power, the GM is encouraged to rule in the favor of the Power being, well, powerful enough to do the job - you want to rule in favor of the option most likely to let the Players have a good time, but you also want to remain consistent with your rulings.

This turns more complicated when it is the Enemy throwing Powers all over the place, who refresh their pool of Points between battles. If it turns out that the PC's rivals are too difficult with their constant restocking, you can have them stick to using defensive powers and retreat when Tension gets too high for them to handle - Live Another Day is perfect for this.





## Prodigy Genre Powers

### Purity

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: You heal yourself of any Conditions placed on your Unit from an enemy Weapon's special effects.

Description: His sub-operator was freaking out. "Sensors are going haywire, we cannot detect the location of the enemy – it is all pitch black outside!"

But that did not discourage Matthew. "Is that all? Then...

WE WILL ATTACK THE DARKNESS!"

### Signature Weapon

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Choose any one Weapon you have when you take this Power. When activated, your next offensive Action using the chosen Weapon gains an Advantage to its Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: Stained from head to toe in all manners of fluids and substances, the Demiurge brought down its crude hand to shatter apart yet another adversary's head. The bloody head of the victim held its shape and was impaled along the Demiurge's crystal-riden back, joining the other 49 already present. "YESSSSSSSSSS," he shouted, "I AM THE BEST AT SKULLS!"

### Variable Range

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: For the next three Rounds all your Weapons gain a Range of 1-8.

Description: The particle cannon round neatly took off the head of the Gear at point-blank with its last bit of power. Valerie switched to her blade and took aim at the fleeing Gear barely visible in the distance. That throw would have earned her a gold medal if this were a sport.

### Keeping Up

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Raise your Evasion, Armor and Tension to match the highest amongst your Squad for the next three Rounds.

Description: "They've all spent their lives doing things I couldn't imagine, they have more experience with Gears than I'll probably ever have. Its not right for me to be better than them. But I don't want to be a liability, or dead weight that can't defend itself. I WILL NOT SLOW THEM DOWN!"

### Ready For Another Go

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Restore all of your Energy.

Description: The servo's strained as the SunBuster weakly rose. It began to glow from within, electricity surging over its exposed surfaces. "My god, the Gygravagnite is responding! The energy is enough to fire another Solar Flare!"

### Unyielding Will

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Restore your current Threshold Level to full.

Description: "Can't you see this resistance is useless? Don't throw your lives away like this!" The enemy platoon fired again and again, sending Will's flying Gear back to the ground. Each time it stood back up again, as if held together by nothing but will.

### Come at Me Bro

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds, when an Enemy makes an Offensive Test against another Ally, you may Attack that individual Enemy once after their own Action has finished.

Description: His Gear planted himself in front of the group. With a metal hand, it pointed at the enemy squad and made a throat slitting motion. That should buy the Wagner some time, now he only had to hang in there.

### Back At You

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: You may redirect any one instance of an attack that would Damage you back at its source. You do not take any Damage and the enemy takes half the amount you would have received instead (rounding down).

Description: Weaving out of the way of the missiles on their second pass, the Q-Taiji's Pilot smiled as he realised the missiles had found a better heat source to track: the now-smoking launcher that fired them.

### Imagination is the Limit

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds you may Mid-Scene Upgrade once on your turns, as the Genre Power of the same name, without having to pay any additional Genre Points or requiring to purchase the Upgrades afterwards. These uses of Mid-Scene Upgrade do not count for your per-turn Genre Power use.

Description: "Give up, you're out of ammunition and surrounded, be reasonable!" The enemy shouted.

"NO, I REFUSE!" Came the reply from the silver-coloured mech as it flew into the air and began bombarding its enemies with some kind of devastating heat ray. "I TOTALLY HAVE ICE MISSILES TOO!"

### Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better

Speed: Special

Cost: X

Effect: Use any one Genre Power that costs X or less and has been already used during this Operation by someone else. With the cost of this Power counting as having paid the cost of the selected Genre Power.

Description: Red weaved behind chaff, shielding itself from laser fire. "Oh yeah? Two can play at that game!" Said White, the return fire sizzling uselessly against a building.



## Ace Genre Powers

### Multitasking

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: You may activate two Special Modes at once for the next three Rounds.

Description: Both concepts were mutually incompatible, to the point the PsAICon would never be able to automatize the process. So, Wilhelm figured, he could activate the Trans and Armor modes of defense and manually control them both – he would dub this the Trans-Armor System.

### Pierce

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Your next Attack ignores all Protective Barrier Upgrades or other abilities that increase Armor temporarily or reduce Damage taken in exchange of energy.

Description: It was a difficult shot, Miguel was not just trying to land a hit on that annoyingly speedy Outsider, but she also had to try and find the spot of weakest resistance of the Gravagne Field. She pulled the trigger, and the beast shook on its side as a single projectile tore a hole into the green flames surrounding it.

### Speedster

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: You may move up to three Distances instead of one as part of your Move until next Round.

Description: Their blades locked again as both Actors shouted at each other how everything was the other's fault. They struggled momentarily, then Charles pulled away.

Ray would have none of this. Before the red Gear had the time to catch his breath, a flurry of brutal punches signaled Charles' defeat.

### The Weakest Link

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Choose one Enemy, their Armor is halved (rounding down) until next Round.

Description: "The way target 7 moves tells me that he took out his auxiliary plates to reduce his energy consumption and noise. Aim for the central armor." Yasha gave the orders, and the entire team launched a rainbow of energy beams from their multiple cannons, aimed at the weakest spot.



### Clean Up

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: The next time you would attack a single Enemy with a non-Blast Weapon, attack an additional Enemy within Range, treating it as a single attack for the purposes of Tests, resources spent, and other such minutiae.

Description: In these massed ranks, Emily could far more easily swing her weapon's barrel along the line of crowd and fire without aiming; she'd always hit something.

### Cool Under Pressure

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Add your Tension to Evasion for the next three Rounds.

Descriptions: Neil's Gear strafed rapidly from side to side as it moved. This was standard for most experienced Actors, though many lost track of such basic evasive routines when rattled by intensifying enemy attacks. Neil would not. He continued: *left, right, jump over, roll sideways.*

### Confusion In The Ranks

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds, all Enemies suffer a Disadvantage to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: Brandon cut through their tight formation. The enemy began to respond, moving shields through the gaps in the ranks to cover their exposed surface, but Brandon pulled out the ominously glowing chip in his pocket, inserting it into his radio. The virus ate away at what coordination the enemy had left, if only he could see their faces when all of their communications were switched to the local Polka station.

### Counter Intelligence

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: Cancel the effects of any one Genre Power used by another.

Description: Any second now, was what Harumi thought. That guy loved his cinematic entrances, and that wall was perfect in every respect. She could hear his steps reach the other side of it.

"DYNAMIC ENTRY-" rung out from a loudspeaker on the other side, followed by a loud sound of metal crushing brick and then running into the wall of reinforced steel hidden inside it.

### One Shot, One Kill

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds, you may treat the roll of your Accuracy Tests as if they were a 10, and add all of the surplus to the subsequent Penetration Test as a bonus instead of half.

Description: Jamal took a long breath in from his cigarette, letting it fill his lungs. He exhaled, and felt calmer. Calm enough to make every shot from his rifle count at this distance.

### Exhaustion

Speed: Called

Cost: X

Effect: Any one target loses Xd10 Energy.

Description: Kao dodged another hit from the immense hammer, and another, and another. With his frame as light as it was he could keep this up all day. His opponent however, could most certainly not.



## Coordinator Genre Powers

### Guiding Hand

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Any one Ally doubles the Accuracy bonus of their Weapons for their next Accuracy Test this Round.

Description: "Adjusting laser focus for 600m engagement." "My arrays have them picked as 800m away." "Well of course you're further away, it's trigonometry!" "Nick. I am 50m away from a certain idiot." ".....Adjusting laser focus for 800m engagement."

### Patience of a Saint

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: For the next three Rounds you gain a temporary Genre Point anytime you are the target of an offensive Action. This effect ends if you take any offensive Actions yourself, even indirect or controlling ones such as Aim, Assist or Halt.

Description: Rita lifted her Gear's head over the wall. She was met by a barrage of shells. She tucked back down. "Why are they firing at me?" She took another look. More hostile fire. "I'm not even a threat to them." She took one last look, the last shot that would ever be fired from that position pinging off her pauldron. "They could have shot the guy running at them with a sword."

### Retroactively Prepared

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Choose one Support Upgrade when you take this Power. When activated, you gain another use of said Upgrade for that Operation.

Description: The Lux Cannon failed to project its usual column of heat and destruction, the beeping noise and blinking red meter told Isha that it was not going to fire again anytime soon. Good thing he always kept a spare E-Cap under the Gear's wrist! The proverbial ace in the hole was slotted into the Weapon, and the beam of fiery death tore through enemy ranks once again.

### Mind over Matter

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Your Squad becomes immune to any Conditions from an enemy Weapon's special effects for the next three Rounds. This will end any Conditions on them currently in place as well.

Description: The Cryptids netted another ally with their labyrinthine restraints, capturing the Paladin much like a spider would web a bug. Russell drawled, "you know what I call people who rely on all this fancy bullshit instead of giving their enemy a good scrap?" After a short wait, he spilled the punchline, "cowards." With a flex of their synth-muscles, he and his comrades broke free.

## Pull Yourself Together

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Any one Unit treats its Maimed Areas as if they were functioning properly for the next three Rounds.

Description: He could imagine himself retelling what just happened later. "There lied the leg's armor in ruins, a smoking wreck of barely recognizable flesh and metal. And yet, the Gear kept on walking." It is amazing what you can do when you know a little hypnotism and are psychically linked to a giant monster. "Because you see, our Foundation Gears are just as susceptible to the placebo effect as we are."

## Shield Another

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: For the next three Rounds any other Ally adds their Tension to Armor.

Description: Shin was nervous to say the least, the waves of enemies just kept coming and there was no sign of reinforcements arriving in the immediate future. He gulped, "We might die here."

But Reina would have none of that. "You will not die." Shin blinked and turned to look at her resolute face in the comm screen, as she spoke, "I will protect you."

## Carry my Hopes

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: After any other Ally has taken his Action this Turn, they may take another one, with the condition that they may not repeat any Actions they have already taken that Turn or use the same Weapon twice with different Actions.

Description: Thomas felt the sickening weightlessness after his attack hit the flying beast. No more jumpjet fuel. His role was over. He spotted Borov below.

"MAKE THE JUMP!" "I can't reach!" "Not if you talk like that!" Borov flew over to Thomas, and flung him the rest of the way.

## Righteous Fury

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds you double the Penetration bonus of your Weapons.

Description: The others gasped over their commlinks at the furrowed brow and gritted teeth on Gunter. He was known for his ennui, but something had broken it. Gunter walked forward, and coldly jabbed his switchpile straight through the shield frantically thrown in front of him, crushing the pilot behind. There were sighs of relief when his face returned to normal.



### Strength in Union

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: Restore the current Threshold Levels of all your Squad to full.

Description: "Listen, to the will of those sleeping under the soil, to the voices of those lost in the sea, to the dying wish of those who became stars in the sky. The time has come to bring this dream to fruition. Rise, young men and women of Hiryu, and become legends!"

### Got your Back

Speed: Called

Cost: X

Effect: For the next three Rounds, your Squad gains a bonus of X times three to their Evasion and Armor.

Description: Chen raised a curtain of sand with her Vulcans, obscuring the enemy's immediate field of vision - it was not going to fool their sensors but it should prove an annoyance and that was all she needed it to be.



## Professional Genre Powers

### Director

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Halve the cost in Genre Points of any Combination Attacks performed by your Squad for the next three Rounds.

Description: "SYNCHRONISE CHRONOMETERS!" Charlie bellowed. "Check!" Came three replies. "SYNCHRONISE DRIFT SPEED!" "Check!" Came three replies, and the dull throb of altitude thrusters firing nearby within the vacuum sounded as well. "SYNCHRONISE OBJECTIVE!" "None left standing!"

### Hotblooded Fervor

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: Reduce the Armor belonging to a target you are attacking by half, rounding down, for the purposes of this Attack.

Description: "THOUGH NONE OF YOU KILLED MY FAMILY," shouted Matthew as his Revolution weaved through the enemy formation slicing and dicing.

"THOUGH NONE OF YOU GAVE UP ON EARTH!" He continued, peppering the Gears around him with vulcan shots. "YOU STAND FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT DID!" He ended, the Gears exploding around him in unison.

### Target Lock

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Your next Accuracy Test is an automatic success, with no surplus bonus, and Trick Dodge or similar abilities will not work against it.

Description: Toshiken guided his reticule over the enemy Gear. An actor marksman of his calibre understood that the true way to an inescapable shot was not to aim, but rather to teach the PsAICon to aim for you.

### All Weapons, Full Power

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: All previously used One-Shot Weapons belonging to your Squad are able to fire one more time.

Description: "It's been a long time since our days as counter-terrorism squad 7B. We've come a long way since then, acquiring 20m high robots, and sophisticated energy weaponry. Remember the double tap? We are encountering similar problems, and we'll use a similar solution."





### Martyr

Speed: Instant

Cost: 2

Effect: The next time you would be dealt Damage, the Enemy that damaged you also suffers the same final Threshold loss that was inflicted on you.

Description: The Outsider was far too fast to catch by the much slower Aegis Gravis, and thus Hassan seemingly submitted to doom before it. He was skewered on the end of its weapon, drawn up into the sky. "Gotcha..." he said, as multiple anchors buried themselves in the Outsider's side. It would not escape the next attack.

### On the Double!

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Your Squad may move two Zones instead of one as part of their next Move.

Description: The squad moved in as one flock, but with a current flowing through it, bringing those from the front end, shields still molten from laser fire back to the rear to manage their damage control. Emile was familiar with the concept from cycling, though in this race you didn't want to get ahead.

### Slow and Steady

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds treat your Tension as if it were doubled for the purposes of Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: A purple wave of energy abruptly washed off of the Outsider's backside, flattening a city block. Intel suggested this depleted its forcefield. "Now it's on." Katrina grinned to herself.

### Unbreakable

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: The next time you would receive Damage, halve the final amount of Threshold lost, rounding down and increase your Tension by 1d5 until end of Operation.

Description: Everyone freaked out when the Paladin was hit by the Positron Beam, but the Gear simply stood there until eventually the power of the Beam gave out.

"I'm brave, not stupid." Thomas discarded the burnt and now useless remains of the space shuttle top he'd picked from the debris, his impromptu shield.



### With Extreme Prejudice

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: Choose one Enemy. Your Squad gains an Advantage to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests against them for the next three Rounds.

Description: The Custos emerged from its mothership, that creature was the last thing between them and freedom "This is Saviour-1 to all units. For the sake of this planet's tomorrow, attack!"

### Rally the Troops

Speed: Called

Cost: X

Effect: For the next three Rounds your Squad gains a bonus of X times two to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: "INITIATE TROYE FORMATION!" The all female special mission force burst from their concealment within the monument, causing a rain of burning bullets over the battlefield.

## Finishing Touches

After you are done creating the most important aspects of your Character, you should make sure to note them down in the character sheet (adding any reminders or memory aids that you feel might be useful) and figure out the other bits that will also be relevant but in a less direct manner to the game experience.

## Roleplaying Details

A Character is more than a collection of numbers. They are living, breathing entities with their own strong points and frailties, their own unique endearing and annoying quirks, and you should strive to make them as three dimensional as possible.

The most crucial of these details is your Character's name, after which come other factors such as age, ethnicity, height, favorite food, and whatever else you feel could ever be relevant. While having all these extra tidbits of information available can be useful (a birthday date can be relevant to plans for the character's birthday, for instance) you only need to add as much as you are comfortable with.

Exchange information with your fellow players and see if there's any way in which you can use each other's ideas to improve your own to create a better group experience.

Go back and change your Attributes, Themes, Powers, and whatever else you think you want to change after having this conversation. You'll get a chance to customize your character further later but this is the final stop for what they will start with.

## Roleplaying Details Questionnary

What are the Character's Gender and Age? Do they look and act the part?

What are the Character's Height and Weight? Are they below average, above it, or just in the middle?

What is the Character's ethnicity? How stereotypical are they physically and in personality?

How does the Character look? Are they attractive? What is their color of hair, eyes and skin?

How does the Character carry themselves? Are they confident, unassuming, or perhaps attention whores?

What is the Character's social standing? Are they wealthy and envied? Poor but deeply respected? Strict middle class?

What did the Character do for a living before being recruited? Do they still work it? Were they good at it?

How educated and savvy is the Character? Do they have a Ph.D, street smarts, or are they simply dumb as a brick?

What was it like for them to grow up? What was their family situation? Did they have many friends, few, any at all?

Is the Character religious? Are they into philosophical metaphysics? Do they try to use Quantum Science to sound "deep"?

Is the Character politically minded or do they stick to fighting without getting involved? How would they like the status quo to change?

What does the Character do in their spare time? Do they have a hobby or are they workaholics?

Is the Character a social butterfly or more introspectively minded? If they're not entirely extrovert or introvert, how do they balance them?

Does the Character respect tradition and the letter of the law? If so, do they believe in a right and wrong or do they see themselves as gray?

Is the Character imaginative and future-oriented? If so, do they like to enable others to realize their untapped potential or do they just help themselves?

## Random Backstory and Details Generation

Allowing the process of creating a character to have an element of chance need not be devoid of creativity. GGG has such a method but it is more of a guide to encourage a degree of creativity - as opposed to making every little choice for the Player.

Follow the steps as they are outlined, rolling either 1d100 or 1d10 as the number to the left of the table indicate, and don't just take the results at face value, feel free to twist and bend their meaning to make a coherent story. First, roll 4d10 and assign each results to one of the four tables below. Then roll 1d5, this is how many Unique Quirks you will have, proceed to roll 1d100 that many times on the Quirk table.



### 1.Family History

1	All immediate family is dead or missing.
2	Parents are working with the UEF.
3	Parents are gone and you must care for your siblings.
4	Your entire family is hunted by the UEF for traitorous crimes.
5	Parents were part of Projects Sonne, Mond or Sterne.
6	Parents are spies, deep undercover in UEF territory.
7	Family has disowned and exiled you.
8	Your siblings want to Enact like you.
9	You are from a distinguished bloodline.
0	You don't know or remember your family.

### 2.Importtant Acquaintance

1	A childhood friend of the opposite sex.
2	A good friend somewhere in the base of operations.
3	Someone you are at odds with as a co-worker.
4	Your closest friend, always in need of aid.
5	A rival in one or more battlefields of life.
6	Your very own wise mentor figure.
7	A masked or otherwise mysterious 'friend.'
8	A stalker that you may or may not know of.
9	You are betrothed, whether you like it or not.
0	You are lonely, oh so very lonely.

### 3.Your Gear and You

1	The original Actor of your Gear died during an enemy attack and you sit in the Core now in their place.
2	You stole the Gear from its original owners.
3	You were trained to Enact for years by your faction.
4	You are just a simple career soldier that chose to Enact, and the Gear was issued to you.
5	You only Enact as part of your secret identity.
6	The Gear will only respond to you, for some reason, and you have no other choice than to pilot it.
7	The Gear is a gift from a family member, friend, or lover and you respect their wishes.
8	You were offered a deal you could not refuse, and lend your skills as Actor in service.
9	The Gear is your 'giant robot friend.'
0	You made the Gear yourself.

### 4.Enacting Pedigree

1	Served under a famous officer, who marked you as their favorite.
2	Encountered and defeated a cryptid alone, but was exposed to its harmful energies.
3	Protected a settlement from an enemy raid on your lonesome, holding the enemy off until help arrived.
4	Evacuated a number of civilians from enemy territory, becoming a media hero for some time.
5	Served as test pilot for an important project, and helped to cement Gear technologies now taken for granted.
6	Rescued a kidnapped VIP belonging to your faction, and gained considerable reputation.
7	Are the sole survivor of your original team, and branded as both a lucky survivor and a bad luck charm.
8	Wiped out a cell of insurgents, in possession of anti-personnel Boards and chemical weapons.
9	Had a minor role as part of an important operation to your faction, and is considered to be reliable and competent.
0	Had to make a difficult choice between letting a key enemy figure escape or protecting civilian life.

## 5.A Unique Quirk

01	Your name is clearly foreign.
02	You are clearly foreign.
03	You have an embarrassing name or nickname.
04	You have a prestigious nickname.
05	You have the same name as somebody famous
06	You have changed your name many times.
07	You are not good at remembering names.
08	You always pace about or fidget anxiously.
09	You constantly twirl your hair or stroke your beard.
10	You always hum or sing this one catchy tune.
11	Your movements are quick, and jerky.
12	You smoke and clearly could use some mints.
13	You are a fortuneteller. But not necessarily good.
14	You have recurring nightmares.
15	You are a daydreamer and zone out a lot.
16	You always forget which day of the week it is.
17	Your birthday comes up on a holiday.
18	You love puzzles and riddles.
19	You are excessively polite and amicable.
20	You use slang no one else really gets.
21	You think out loud.
22	You speak in a silly, exaggerated accent.
23	You are loud. Extremely so.
24	You stutter.
25	You use long words and flowery speech.

26	You often get your metaphors mixed.
27	You are an incurable punster, and like them bad.
28	Your voice is like that of a particular voice actor.
29	You look like somebody famous.
30	You look bored.
31	You look way younger than you are.
32	You look way older than you are.
33	You are androgynous.
34	You look at yourself in the mirror constantly.
35	You are considered cute, but not attractive.
36	Your looks are impossibly plain and boring.
37	You aren't very pretty, but you look badass.
38	You only have one eye.
39	You have heterochromia.
40	You are albino.
41	You have an unusual hair color, such as blue.
42	You have an expressive ahoge or antenna hair.
43	You are bald.
44	You adorn your hair, such as with braids or pins.
45	You talk. A lot.
46	You like to argue with other people.
47	You don't like to lie.
48	You tend to try and push your morals into others.
49	You are a vegetarian.
50	You only eat meat.





## 5.B.Unique Quirk (continued)

51	You like sweets a little too much.
52	You have a favorite tea brand you always drink.
53	You drink way too much coffee.
54	You like to cook for other people.
55	You have an imaginary friend.
56	You have a side job that you do out of love.
57	You do charity when possible.
58	You are a cheapskate.
59	You are quite a pack rat.
60	You compulsively buy what's new and better.
61	You wear provocative clothes.
62	You wear extravagant clothes.
63	You wear formal clothes.
64	You wear the same clothes day in day out.
65	You wear a mask. No one questions this.
66	You have one or more gold teeth.
67	You have a tattoo that can be easily seen.
68	You have a cool battle scar or multiple of them.
69	You have freckles.
70	You keep a "relationship chart."
71	You collect hats and always wear a different one.
72	You have a keepsake of a loved one you treasure.
73	You have a treasured keepsake of your childhood.
74	You use shades, even indoors or at night.
75	You enjoy classical musiic with style.

76	You are usually listening to saccharine j-pop.
77	You often quote the lyrics of your favorite band.
78	You listen to music even in battle and dance to it.
79	You have a personal 'theme song.'
80	You have a pet robot.
81	You have a pet animal.
82	You have a pet that is possibly illegal.
83	You have a ridiculous number of pets.
84	You are afraid of large animals.
85	You are afraid of bugs.
86	You are afraid of heights.
87	You are afraid of clowns.
88	You are afraid of ghosts and the dead.
89	You belive you've had a paranormal experience.
90	You want to have a paranormal experience.
91	Your favorite genre is horror.
92	Your favorite genre is comedy.
93	Your favorite genre is drama.
94	Your favorite genre is action.
95	Your favorite genre is romance.
96	You don't care as long as it has robots.
97	You want to make your own tv show or manga.
98	You want to make your own videogame.
99	You want to make your own roleplaying game.
00	You are genre-aware.



## Example of Character Creation

Violet wants to join the ongoing game that Ingham is running mid-Season, and settles with him that her character's concept is going to be Professor Tendo's Daughter, named Michiko.

Since she's going to be joining the Far West Gygravagnite Research Institute (under the jurisdiction of the Hiryu's Soaring Dragon Fortress), her faction is already chosen for her, so she moves on past that.

Before setting down on a Nature for Michiko, she asks Ingham what the existing PCs are like, so she selects the Professional Nature as it is the only one unrepresented yet, and thus a semblance of a personality for Michiko begins to form in her head - Michiko is trying to prove to her father that she can be a pilot, despite his wishes that she not endanger her life.

Violet considers how to spend Michiko's PP, and figures out that Michiko is going to be the well-learned straight man or woman, as the case may be. Michiko's Intellect is increased by two for 6 PP, making her considerably smarter than average, and Violet adds a point of Drive and Wisdom for 2 PP to make Michiko's level headedness stick.

She decides to complement this with a few points of Academics and Electronics, but doesn't quite know how much to spend on them so she moves on to Traits. A cursory read through the selection of traits makes four of them stand out in her eyes: Common Sense, Jack of all Trades, Scholastics (Biology), and Genius. Ingham brings Ally to her attention, figuring that she could use her relationship with Tendo to her benefit, but Violet argues that Michiko would never ask her dad to get her out of anything.

Back to Michiko's choice of Traits, she obviously can't get all of them since they cost 12 PP total, so she has to make a choice. Looking back at her skills of choice, she figures she can take a Specialization in Academics instead of the Scholastics Trait.

Violet spends her remaining 22 PP as follows: her 9 points worth of Traits go to Common Sense, Jack of all Trades, and Genius, and she spends 13 PP to attain three points each in Electronics and Academics, with the latter having a Specialization in Biology. Having a grand total of 1 PP left, Violet decides to get another point of Grit and keep all her Defenses even.

Since Michiko is done in regards to spending PP, Violet will calculate her Plot Armor now. All of Michiko's Plot Armor statistics are of 6, so every Layer o can take up to 6 points of Damage for a total of 24.

Choosing Themes is comparatively easier, she has to get three and exactly one of each category, so she picks Knowledge, Independence and Pride. Michiko wanted to be a veterinarian as a child and became fascinated by the Outsiders as she grew up. Violet thinks that her PC was going to be one of the scientists in her father's institute but she changed her mind the moment she saw the destruction the Outsiders were capable of with her own eyes.

Michiko still yearns to know more about the function of the Outsiders, and she would definitely know more if she had stuck for a few more years of university, but she is too conceited to go back on her word.

Ingham tells Violet that she'll score Genre Points when either Michiko's desire to know more, to not have to rely on her father's influence, or to not go back on her word visibly make trouble for her as a PC or they make for a great scene at the table for others.

Finally, Violet has to choose four Genre Powers for Michiko. Since she isn't very much of a team player - yet - Michiko begins with Target Lock, Disarm, Slow and Steady, and Unbreakable. Violet already figured out most of Michiko's roleplaying details on the way, so she has no need for the questionnaire or the random tables.

### Tips n Tricks

You have a lot of wiggle room when it comes down to spending your PP, and unless you go out of your way to do so you are not likely to end with a character that performs poorly under the rules. It remains a fact, however, that the sheer multitude of seemingly similar options can be intimidating, never mind that you are often going to find yourself just a few points short of getting *everything* you wanted to have, like a kid taking his allowance to the candy store. To alleviate this issue, a few suggestions are included below.

Traits should be your first choice, you get a lot of mileage out of them from a rules standpoint as well as another layer of characterization for your PC, and it is recommended you get at least 5 or 6 Points worth of Traits. Look for things that make sense with your character concept, and try to have an idea in mind already of the Themes you want to play so as to select Traits with them in mind - A Martial Artist can have Brawns Before Brain as a Bane, an Ally can be a protegee and provide a Reason as My Only Successor.

Skills are second most important, not only do they make your character unique moreso than Attributes do, but they provide bonuses at a much cheaper rate than them, albeit they're more limited in nature. You generally want to have a total of 3 to 5 Skills for a well rounded character, with a few of them being at a rank of 1 or 2 because they're things your character is passable at but not their main draw - A nerdy hacker can be assumed to have a decent general knowledge of academic subjects, and may Academics at just a few points, but it would remain much lower than they have Electronics.

You should have somewhere between 5 and 10 PP left, and at this point it is up to you whether to adjudicate them to Attributes or Plot Armor. Attributes are generally the better idea: They play double duty in improving your Tests as well as your Defenses, but they are more expensive and after a few purchases they usually cost too much to be worth it.

For that reason, Plot Armor is recommended as a purchase later in the game when they are more cost effective as a defensive measure than Attributes.





Name Nichiko Tendo Concept Professor's Daughter  
 Nature Professional XP Total 0 PP Spent 0

## Dramatic Themes

Reason Knowledge  
 Typecast Independence  
 Bane Pride

## Attributes

Fitness 1 Intellect 3 Empathy 1

## Genre Points

Pooled 3  
 Temporary 0

## Roleplaying Details

Stoic, rebellious, fascinated with Outsiders, very smart

## Plot Armor

	Grit	Drive	Wisdom	Consequences
Dent	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	
Crack	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	
Breach	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	
Ajar	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	<u>6/6</u>	

## Skills

## Specializations

Academics	+ <u>3</u>	<u>Biology</u>
Athletics	+	
Combat	+	
Craftsmanship	+	
Deceit	+	
Dexterity	+	
Diplomacy	+	
Electronics	+ <u>3</u>	
Investigation	+	
Machinery	+	
Presence	+	
Survival	+	
Stealth	+	

## Genre Powers

Name	<u>Try Again</u>	Cost	<u>1</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Reroll Acc or Pen with an Advantage</u>				
Name	<u>MidScene Up</u>	Cost	<u>2</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Buy improptu an Upgrade</u>				
Name	<u>Not so Fast</u>	Cost	<u>3</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Save a friend from an attack</u>				
Name	<u>Target Lock</u>	Cost	<u>1</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Autohit one Acc Test</u>				
Name	<u>Disarm</u>	Cost	<u>2</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Disable a Weapon that missed</u>				
Name	<u>Slow and Steady</u>	Cost	<u>3</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Double Tension for 3 Rounds</u>				
Name	<u>Unbreakable</u>	Cost	<u>3</u>	Speed	
Effect	<u>Halves Damage taken, 1/3 Tension</u>				
Name		Cost		Speed	
Effect					
Name		Cost		Speed	
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## Traits and Equipment

Name	Effect
<u>Experienced Veteran</u>	<u>Bonus Genre Power</u>
<u>Practice Makes Perfect</u>	<u>Repeat a Power once</u>
<u>Common Sense</u>	<u>3 GM hints per Ep</u>
<u>Jack of All Trades</u>	<u>Trained in all Skills</u>
<u>Genius</u>	<u>Use Int with any Skill</u>

IN ONE OF THE MANY ISLANDS DOTTING THE FAR WEST ARCHIPIELAGO IS A TESTING FACILITY FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO THE WAR EFFORT, THE GYGRAVAGNITE RESEARCH INSTITUTE. IT IS ONE DARK AND STORMY NIGHT LOOMING ABOVE THE OTHERWISE RELATIVELY QUIET PEACE OF THE ENCLAVE THAT IS THIS SCIENTIFIC FORTRESS. MARIA DESIR MADE HER WAY THROUGH A DIMLY LIT HALLWAY AND PUNCHED A CODE INTO THE KEYPAD AT THE END.

THE BLAST DOORS OPENED WITH THE PUFF OF CRYOGENIC GAS EXITING THE CONTAINMENT CHAMBER, AND A CHILL WENT DOWN HER SPINE, BUT SHE DID NOT ENTER. SHE SIMPLY STOOD MOTIONLESS WITH HER EYES CLOSED, FOR SECONDS THAT SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY. THEN SHE TURNED AROUND.

"DON'T YOU KNOW IT IS RUDE TO SPY ON OTHERS, JEFF?"

THE YOUNGER MAN LEFT HIS HIDING SPOT BEHIND A CORNER, RUBBING THE BACK OF HIS NECK "...SORRY, CHIEF."

MARIA SIMPLY CROSSED HER ARMS, CLEARLY AWAITING AN EXPLANATION. IT TOOK A WHILE UNTIL HER STERN GAZE FORCED SOME WORDS OUT OF HER BUMBLING EXCUSE OF A SUBORDINATE.

"...UM, YOU DROPPED THIS." AN OLD AND RUGGED ENVELOPE, UNOPENED, ADDRESSED TO ONE RUBINA HEINLEIN. MARIA STEPPED FORWARD AND TOOK IT FROM HIS HANDS, SWIFTLY BUT NOT FORCEFULLY. "THANK YOU." WHILE HER TONE WAS ANYTHING BUT SCORNFUL, IT WAS EVIDENT SHE WAS EXPECTING MORE OUT OF HIM, BUT IF SHE HAD TO STAND ANOTHER TENSE SILENCE IT WOULD BE THE DEATH OF HER "YOU KNOW WHO THE HEINLEINS ARE?"

"THE ARISTOCRATIC FAMILY THAT USED TO GOVERN A CONSIDERABLE PART OF THE SPACE COLONIES?" HE RISKED, OMITTING THE RUMORS ABOUT THEM BEING PSYCHICS, TRANSHUMANS, OR SOMETHING MORE SINISTER ALTOGETHER.

"AND WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF ME BEING IN POSSESSION OF THIS TEN YEAR OLD ENVELOPE?" SHE WAVED IT AROUND AND FLICKED IT IN FRONT OF JEFF, POINTING AT THE DATE WITH TWO INDEX FINGERS.

"...THAT YOU'RE SOME KIND OF... SPACE PRINCESS?" THIS WAS STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A HORRIBLY CLICHED OR CONTRIVED PLOT, HE JUST WASN'T SURE WHICH ONE IT WAS. JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE HE DECIDED TO ERR ON OF BOTH.

"ATTA BOY." AT THAT SHE SIMPLY TURNED TO ENTER THE MYSTERIOUS ROOM, LEAVING A JEFF WHOSE GAST WAS MOST DEFINITELY FLABBERED BEHIND, AND THUS SPRINTED QUICKLY TO CATCH UP BEFORE THE BLAST DOORS LOCKED HIM OUTSIDE

"H-HEY CHIEF! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?"

SHE LED HIM ACROSS A METALLIC CATWALK OVER A SHAFT NEITHER OF THEM COULD SEE THE BOTTOM (OR TOP) OF "THE PROFESSOR." SHE EXPLAINED, TO WHICH JEFF UNDERSTANDABLY BLINKED IN RESPONSE. MARIA DID NOT TURN AROUND "THE PROFESSOR WAS A FRIEND OF OUR FAMILY, AND MY FATHER GAVE HIM THIS LETTER, DETAILING THAT WHEN I WAS READY I SHOULD SEE WHAT THEY BOTH HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTING DOWN HERE."

THIS SOUNDED RATHER PERSONAL, AND MADE JEFF START TO FEEL SELF-CONSCIOUS "I... SHOULD PROBABLY LEAVE YOU TO SEE THIS FOR YOURSELF, SHOULDN'T I?" OF COURSE, HE WAS CURIOUS TOO, AND THUS HE DID NOT LEAVE. "IT IS FINE." SHE SAID "I ALREADY KNOW WHAT IS DOWN HERE. I DIDN'T DROP THE LETTER, JEFF. I THREW IT, I ALREADY KNEW ALL OF THIS." MARIA HALTED HER WALK AND TURNED HER FACE UPWARDS. JEFF DID THE SAME.

WHAT THEY SAW HAD THE POWER TO LET MAN BE A GOD OR A DEVIL.



# CHAPTER 4



## MECHA CONSTRUCTION

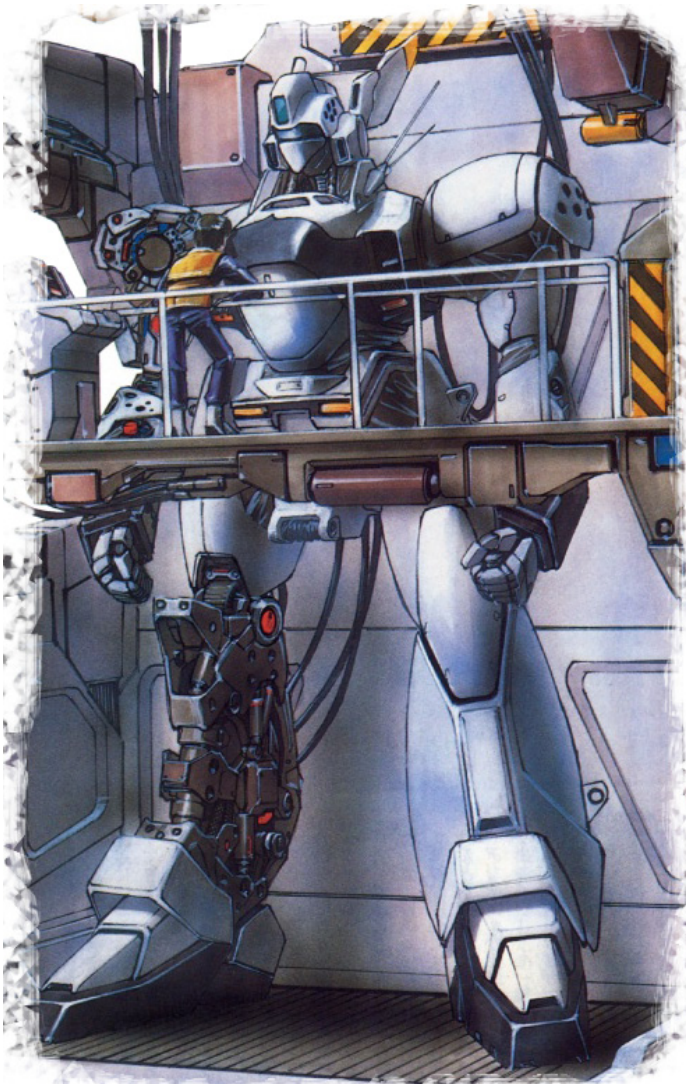


## Gears for Everyone

Your Actor needs a Gear of their own, otherwise it is kind of pointless to be playing a Mecha game in the first place. The process to create Gears (the same used for city-wrecking giant monsters) is largely effect oriented.

What this means is that the how and why of their capabilities does not matter as much as the what. You can justify and flavor your Gear's gigantic energy weapon as an enormous shoulder mounted positron cannon, eye beams, or even a gun that shoots a lightshow of rainbow lasers.

In other words, Mecha Construction has less flavor in its creation and is more mechanical oriented - pardon the pun. The end result is that you have room to make your Gear as aesthetically distinctive as you want, though you can make use of the default examples provided within if you do not feel like taking your time with that.



### Mecha Construction Summary

Your Gear, being an extension of your PC, is much simpler to create on a conceptual level and has less steps, but the process of customization itself is more complex.

#### Step 1) Archetype and Design

The first thing you have to do is figure out what the Gear's fundamental and most unique characteristic is. This comes both from their Archetype and from a single selected Design from that Archetype. The Archetypes cover Super Robots, Real Robots, Biomecha, and even Battleships.

#### Step 1) Gear Chassis

The Gear's Chassis will determine its general performance, deciding whether it is dodgy or tanky, how much Energy it can afford to spend with its special abilities, and so on.

#### Step 2) Upgrades and Weapons

Your Gear has 30 Upgrade Points (UP) that are used much like PP. Build on the Base Mechanics from its Chassis or acquire entirely new Upgrades and Weapons.

#### Step 3) Gear Details

In the same way that PCs get their own questionnaire for extra depth, Gears have one for you to truly make them your own personal machine and pimp them out to your heart's content.

## Choose an Archetype and a Design

An Archetype is the building foundation of your Gear, each of them representing conventions of the Mecha genre that are generally incompatible with each other - outliers exist but often the exception proves the rule.

Once you have chosen an Archetype, you must **choose a Design Upgrade from within the Archetype** to assign to your Gear. This Design will specialize your Unit's adaptation of the Archetypal tropes. Design Upgrades are powerful and are **integrated automatically to the Core at no Cost**, but may not be further enhanced.

Generally your choice of Archetype and Design will provide a skeleton to build the rest of your Gear around, some lead you in rather obvious directions while others require a more careful approach to make the best of them.

Certain Designs have similar properties to more easily obtained abilities, it may seem like a waste to take one of said Designs, but they are much more efficient than their competition at their assigned jobs.

Your selection of Archetype and Design is one of the most important choices you will make. If this sounds a bit intimidating, do not fret, as they are all good enough that you have to go out of your way in making bad choices to regret your own.



## The SDF's Super Prototypes

The Hiryu's Gears are known for being testbeds of novel technology and for their ability to stand toe-to-toe with the fearsome Outsiders, often emphasizing melee over ranged combat.

They also optionally may incorporate the Motion Tracing system to their PsAICon interface, which eschews traditional, monitor-based visual interfaces and replaces them with a 'visual sphere' that gives the Actor full view of everything that goes on around them. This system does away with the usual control systems for motion sensors and permits an experienced warrior to feed their own movements directly into the computation systems, saving countless hours of PsAICon training, should they choose to forego the standard system.

Voice recognition equipment is present for the activation of features that Actors wouldn't be able to mimic with their own bodies, from weaponry mounted into one's arms or head to systems more integral to the Gear such as force fields or anti-gravity.

### Super Prototype Designs

#### **Experimental G-Furnace:**

All of your Energy consuming Weapons take 1 less Energy to use, to a minimum of 0.

#### **Internal Fortification:**

Losing the Nominal Level and Superficial Levels of Threshold during an Operation will not Maim your Gear's Areas.

#### **Output 120%:**

During your Beginning phase, you may reduce your Threshold by 1d10 to gain a temporary Genre Point. If this would destroy you, the ability is cancelled and you do not gain any Genre but don't lose the Threshold either.

#### **Learning Computer:**

Whenever anyone uses a Genre Power, your Tension rises by the amount of points spent, until end of Operation.



## The Wagner's Production Models

Hiryu may have its fancy prototypes but the rest of the RUF does not lie on its laurels. They employ only true and tested technology and milk it for all its worth, with only a fraction of the Gears and Actors possessed by their enemies, they simply must do so.

After all these years, the RUF has developed its fair share of unique Gears and technology tailor-made for their own war, but due to limited resources may only produce them in small numbers and thus they get 'rationed' to groups that already have proven their sufficiency in the field, such as the Wagner Squadron.

### Production Model Designs

#### **Mental Link System:**

Every Turn you have an additional Action exclusively for the purpose of controlling one of your Remote Weapons.

#### **Ammo Efficient:**

You may use One-Shot Weapons twice per Operation and may ignore the Recharging quality from one of your Weapons once per Operation.

#### **Mass Produced:**

Double the Threshold regeneration from spending a Turn inside your Base or from the Jury Rig ability - when applied on yourself and others. Doing so may restore a lost Level of Threshold, repairing the Maimed Area back to normal.

#### **Superior Blueprints:**

Raise your Base Evasion and Armor by 3.





## The Foundation's Living Weapons

Though some may doubt these are true Gears given their obvious biological nature, the Clarke Foundation either does not realize that they are not fooling anyone or does not care to give their creations a new name.

Their main draw is that they tend to have greater energy output and resilience than other Gears. This is believed to be due to the fact that they draw energy not just from their Gygravagnite reserves but also due to the internal creature's own unstable form, in a state of flux between 'living matter' and 'organic energy.'

### Living Weapon Designs

#### **Berserker:**

If your Threshold ever gets to the Lethal Damage Level, you raise your Tension by 1d10, and may spend 1 Energy at the Beginning of your Turns to ignore the Maim status of all your Areas for 1 Round. This does not repeat itself if it happens more than once per Operation.

#### **Regenerative:**

At the Beginning of your Turn you restore 1 point of Threshold. This will not bring back past lost Levels of Threshold. You may spend an Action to repair a Maimed Area back to normal, and it may be healed afterwards.

#### **Hidden Power:**

Choose any one Upgrade that is not a Sub Unit, Variable Form, or a Weapon. If you would use the Genre Power 'Mid-Scene Upgrade', you may use it to acquire the chosen Upgrade until end of Operation. Upon activation roll 1d10 + your Tension, if the result is of 10 or higher you regain the amount of Genre Points spent. The chosen Upgrade is fully Enhanced and you are not forced to buy it afterwards, bypassing restrictions from Area space, UP remaining, or other such complications.

#### **Organic Field:**

Whenever you would be Damaged you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against said attack by 7.

## Base Units

Much like in the shows it emulates, often PCs and NPCs will find themselves fighting to defend their flagship or base of operations from others, who are trying to reduce it to cinders. Base Units can range from fortresses armed to the teeth to highly mobile carriers for Gears sailing across the sea of stars.

Though they don't have any particular thing they specialize at, they are often better at whatever they do than Gears proper, but nonetheless stand back because their destruction generally results in a mission failure at the very best and something even more catastrophic like everyone dying at the very worst.

### Base Unit Designs

#### **Moving Repository:**

Allies docked inside your Unit recover 1d10 Energy for each Round they spend inside and afterwards they may fire previously used One-Shot Weapons an additional time.

#### **Internal G-Field:**

You cannot be destroyed for as long as you have any Energy remaining, and until then if you would be destroyed you lose 1 Energy instead.

#### **Curtain Fire:**

Increase the area of effect of your Blast Weapons by 1 additional Zone from the target.

#### **Security Escort:**

All of your Aides can take a single Action during your turn without using up your own Action, but may not use yours (or that of another Submech) to take two Actions. If an Aide of yours is destroyed, you may spend an Action and 1 Energy to repair and redeploy them within 1 Zone from you at the beginning of your next Turn. You may also Disable a currently deployed Aide to replace it with a new one.





## Handling Base Units

Sometimes it is a mobile battleship controlled by another PC; other times it is a stationary fortress under NPC control. No one needs to take on the role of playing Base Units, despite their power level, getting attacked by every other enemy isn't really that fun.

When no player volunteers for the role of controlling a Base Unit, the easiest thing to do is to just not have the Base take part in Operations at all. When there is one though, your Base is where you deploy from and what you're (usually) trying to protect from your enemies. If your HQ is destroyed, not only is the Operation likely a failure but there will be dramatic, potentially catastrophic, consequences impacting the lives of the PCs... if the game doesn't end right there, that is.

However, don't just end the game on an anticlimactic note, that simply isn't really fun at all. What happens when a Base is destroyed is largely up to the group to decide. The destruction of a Base has potential for plenty of ramifications on the story at large, such an event will likely be a turning point for your game. We can't really tell you how, but it is a great opportunity to introduce more dramatic elements to the story and make roleplaying more intense instead of just having everyone die.

Since Bases are usually ships, they do not have the usual humanoid Areas common to Gears, instead they have a Bridge in place of the Core, the Antenna takes the place of the Head, the Hull is used as the Torso, the Turrets section is the equivalent of the Arms, and then you have the Stern as the Legs Area.

## Gear Chassis

If an Archetype and its Design are the basis of your Gear's capabilities, then the Chassis defines how the Gear can make use of it, from how many Weapons it can hold to how well it moves.

A Chassis will define your Gear's **Base Mechanics**, and their **Area Capacity**. Base Mechanics are much like a Nature's starting Attribute and Plot Armor arrays, but for Gears. If an effect refers to your Base Mechanics (such as some Upgrades asking for your Accuracy) then it refers to the value from your Chassis including passive bonuses from Enhancements or Designs that are "Always on" but not conditional ones from Tension, Upgrades that need to be activated after deployment, or Weapons.

Each Area corresponds to one of the Gear's visible limbs or to its Core - the cockpit. **All the Areas have a Capacity**, that is the number of **points worth of Upgrades or Weapons it can hold**; Upgrades with an Area requirement of 'None' do not take any space and are for Upgrades entirely separate of the body.

The five Chassis types are Personal, Dynamic, Hybrid, Destroyer and Titanic. Ordered from the speediest to the most well armored, though each one has an unique specialization beyond that in what their Area Capacities allow them to do.



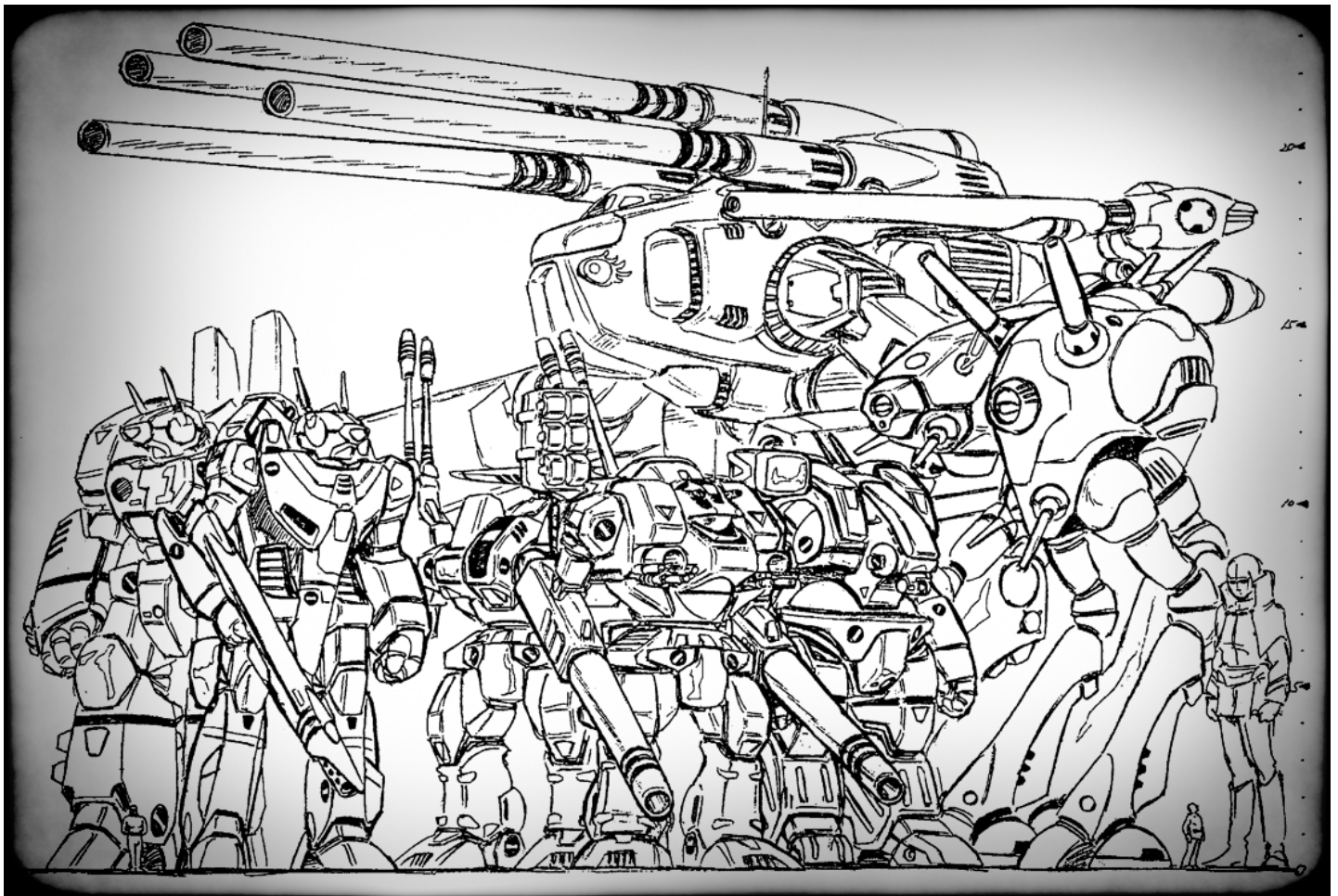
## When Size Matters

There are no hard rules for Gear sizes. In fact, there's nothing in the book that outright tells you the size an individual mecha should have aside from that which is implied in the names and descriptions of the five chassis models.

The default assumption is that the average group will want a mix of sizes among them to represent different typical conventions of the genre, but if you want something more standardized nothing says that two Gears differing in their choice of chassis can't be the same size - and the reverse is also true.

Now if you do want to represent size with chassis? Look no further than below. Be aware that this will take away some options available to players for the sake of common sense, disallowing Base Units of the Personal Chassis being the most obvious.

Personal:  
10 or less meters (32 or less feet)  
Dynamic:  
11 to 30 meters (36 to 98 feet)  
Hybrid:  
31 to 50 meters (101 to 164 feet)  
Destroyer:  
51 to 100 meters (167 to 328 feet)  
Titanic:  
101 or more meters (331 or more feet)



## Personal

The Personal Chassis is lighter and made to emphasize the abilities of the pilot rather than the machine's. Due to the minimal systems it can hold and has to upkeep, it has the highest energy capacity and efficiency is of all Chassis types. Personal types usually take a while to get hit, but once they begin to take damage it piles on really fast and usually pack abilities that grant them additional defense in exchange of their plentiful Energy.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
12	4	6	10	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
15	10	10	15	10

## Dynamic

The Dynamic Chassis prioritizes mobility over resilience, but still has enough capacity for a wide variety of Upgrades to be installed, particularly those with supporting capabilities. It is preferred for mecha that avoid the front line entirely since they are not very good at this whole 'not getting damaged' business, although they can be quite formidable at it thanks to their increased Core capacity.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
20	10	10	10	10



## Hybrid

As the name implies, the Hybrid Chassis is an all-around balanced type that can be optimized to any manner of specialty while still holding its ground in other aspects. Hybrid types can specialize in either evasive maneuvers or being highly resistant to damage or even excel at both.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	8	8	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
15	10	15	10	10

## Destroyer

Destroyer Type Chassis Gears are larger and bulkier than most, and designed to serve as one man armies with more fire-power than any other Chassis type, unfortunately this makes them rather Energy hungry, a resource they struggle to hold on to. They are easy to hit but hard to bring down, specially if they use their available Energy defensively.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
10	10	15	15	10

## Titanic

With the Pilot serving more like an enabler for the Gears's vast capabilities, the Titanic Chassis makes Gears capable of withstanding punishment like no other and capable of housing large amounts of Weapons and other unwieldy Upgrades, at the expense of having most of its power dedicated just to keeping it running. Missing them is virtually impossible, but their Armor is hard to penetrate and even then they have a very large damage buffer before being in real danger.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	10	6	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
10	10	20	10	10



## Basic Mechanics

### Evasion

Evasion makes your Gear harder to hit; the higher the value, the better it can move out of harm's way. Evasion is like Defenses, and failing to meet the number with an offensive test will result in failure, only after that do they get a chance to overcome Armor.

### Armor

Armor measures how difficult it is to actually hurt the Gear after being hit; the higher the value, the harder it is to crack. Armor is the second half of the Defense that attacks need to overcome in order to hurt a Gear.

### Energy

Energy is consumed every time the Gear uses certain Upgrades or Weapons; the higher the Gear's Energy, the more can be used. If the Gear does not have enough Energy to cover the Energy cost then they may not use the Upgrade or Weapon.

### Threshold

Threshold represents how sturdy the Gear is internally and how well it holds against damage after its defenses have been breached. Threshold works much like Plot Armor coming in Nominal, Superficial, Critical and Lethal Threshold Levels.

### Accuracy

Accuracy modifies the Gear's Weapons to be more precise, a Gear with high Accuracy will stand a better chance of landing attacks on its enemies.

### Penetration

Penetration enhances the Gear's Weapons' ability to pierce through the guard and shields of other Gears; the higher the value, the harder for enemies to shrug it off.

## Areas

### Core

The Core is the cockpit of the Gear, functioning as both the brain and heart of the mechanical body. Many of the more powerful Upgrades can only be allocated to the Core, but no Weapons may be installed on it.

### Head

Serving as a secondary Core of sorts, the Head is not just a backup but can also carry many Weapons, making it a versatile Area.

### Torso

The Area that carries the bulk of the Gear's defensive Upgrades, if any, since most of them are rather large and cannot be housed elsewhere. Certain Weapons also fit this criteria, and are some of the most powerful armaments a Gear can wield.

### Arms

Like a soldier needs hands to use its equipment, Gears need them as the primary offensive Area. Although Weapons can be equipped almost everywhere, the Arms are the only ones capable of carrying a considerable number of them, including some of the most powerful ones.

### Legs

The Legs are unsung heroes of mobility without the prestige that most other Areas get - although they are very well suited for handling Upgrades that get around troublesome terrain. Many experienced veterans favor them to carry caches of ammo or other emergency supplies, while mounting an extra gun or two as well just in case.





## Customizing your Gear

Touching up your Gear is much like doing the same for its Actor. **You start with 30 Upgrade Points (UP)** with which you can **purchase Upgrades and Weapons**.

Upgrades come in many different categories, from defensive forcefields to flight systems to programmed battle techniques that push the boundaries of the Gear.

Weapons are bought and then allocated in one of your areas but instead of powering you up, they are used in offensive Actions to lay the hurt on your foes.

### Gear Upgrades Format

#### Name of the Upgrade

Areas: When you purchase an Upgrade or Weapon you must **allocate it to one of your unit's Areas** (Core, Torso, Arms, Head or Legs) and **should that Area be Maimed as a result of Damage any Upgrades or Weapons allocated to it will stop to function for the rest of the Operation** and cannot be repaired unless an ability specifically mentions it may do so. **The Core cannot be Maimed**, but many purchases have limited areas they can be allocated to, and the Core is rarely applicable. **Upgrades with an Area of 'None' do not take any Capacity**, and are only listed down to help you track expenditures of UP.

Cost: How much UP must be spent to purchase the Upgrade or Weapon in question, **an Upgrade or Weapon will use up an amount of 'space' in the Area equal to its Cost**. If an Area would go over its Capacity by the purchase of the Upgrade or Weapon in question, it may not allocate the Upgrade or Weapon to that Area.

Description: A flavor interpretation of what the Upgrade does in-universe. The presented explanation is only a default that you may modify at your leisure, as long as the GM approves, of course.

Effect: The mechanical aspect of the Upgrade, kept as concise and clear as possible. You may want to summarize them further when writing them down on your own character sheet.

Enhancements: **After an Upgrade has been bought it may be further improved with Enhancements, at no cost towards an Area's allocations**. While a Gear with a Torso Capacity of 10 can hold no more than 10 UP of Upgrades, once those Upgrades are in place they may be Enhanced without using up space. **You may only spend your initial UP on purchasing Upgrades, and may not use them to obtain Enhancements**.

## Upgrades

### Exceptional Aptitude

Exceptional Aptitude Upgrades are abilities outside the norm that visibly bend the rules of the game, moreso than other Upgrades do, and have a very powerful effect on the Unit. Furthermore they provide considerable bonuses with their Enhancements, but they all suffer the downside of being incredibly expensive.

#### Challenger

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: You're there to clash with your foes in single combat, keeping their sights focused on you instead of the rest of the battlefield, disrupting the Enemy lines. It is a dangerous job, but you're good enough at it that rarely anyone can escape your advancements unscathed.

Effect: When using the Engage Action, you may move two Zones instead of one.

Additionally, you can attempt to Engage with any Melee Weapon as long as the target is within valid Range, jumping into the Zone they are occupying afterwards instead of dragging them away.

If either special use of Engage fails to do Damage, the Enemy Disengages immediately without using an Action of their own.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP the Base Penetration of your Melee Weapons increases by +1, you may purchase this enhancement five times.

#### Dogfighter

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: Showering the Enemy in missiles is what you excel at, and even if they are difficult to use in the heat of melee you're more than capable of pulling off a missile massacre against all odds.

Effect: Your Missile type Weapons are now Mobile and viable at Ranges 1 and 0.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP the Base Accuracy of Missile type Weapons increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### The Clothes don't Make the Man

An important aspect of any effects-based game is that they are highly compatible with 'Reskinning'. To 'reskin' is to change the flavor descriptions of abilities to suit your character better. An example of reskinning would be to change Aid Another upgrades from tactical knowledge to singing a song or playing music that motivates others to do better.

Since reskinning does not change the rules of the game at all, it is easy enough to do for enhancing the role-playing experience without having to worry about disrupting the game.

### Elusive Target

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: Rather than direct combat you are better suited to operations focused in recon, stealth, or both. You fare better than most when attempting to evade a foe, and with clever use of terrain or high speed maneuvering, you make it impossible for them to target you temporarily.

Effect: Whenever you take the Maneuver or Disengage Actions, you become impossible to target by any kind of Action that chooses an Enemy until your next Turn. Note that while you are safe from being chosen as a target, you are still vulnerable to Blast Weapons that attack the position you are in and other such abilities.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP your unit's Base Evasion increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### G-Buster

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: Your Gear is built to optimize the use of Beam type armament, and makes it that much easier to strike critically at the chinks in the enemy's armor.

Effect: You may add the entirety of the amount you exceeded an Enemy's Evasion DN as a Penetration bonus instead of adding half of it, if you are using Beam weapons.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP the Base Penetration of Beam type Weapons by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### Indomitable Colossus

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: You refuse to back down in the face of adversity, and in fact you seem to thrive in it, performing your best when you're between a rock and a hard place.

Effect: Whenever you lose a Level of Threshold, gain a Temporary Genre Point. This Upgrade will not trigger multiple times for the same Level of Threshold.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP your Base Threshold increases by +1, you may purchase this enhancement five times.

### Sharpshooter

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: You excel at the handling of firearms, with such pinpoint accuracy, you may strike at enemies that would be off-limits to anyone else.

Effect: The maximum Range of your own Ballistic type Weapons with a Range higher than 2 is increased by 1, and attacking any targets within half the maximum range (rounding down) or lower is at an Advantage.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP the Base Accuracy of Ballistic type Weapons increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### Shield of the Meek

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: The pointman, the distraction, the meat shield. Whatever name you go by, you have the risky but necessary job of painting a target over your head so that others can do their thing, either by annoying the hell out of the enemies with dangerous shuffling or by simply kicking your allies out of the way of antagonist fire.

Effect: After performing a Maneuver or a Shift, until next Round you may redirect all attacks targeting Allies within Range 1 to your own Unit, using your own Evasion and Armor as the DNs.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP your Base Armor increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### Supercharged

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: Your Gear is packed with a multitude of highly efficient Gygravagnite generators with enough failsafe cells to continue providing it with power even in the most difficult of circumstances.

Effect: At the beginning of your Turn, you regenerate 1 Energy.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP your Base Energy increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

### Team Player

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: A well-timed strike that packs an overwhelmingly powerful punch, Synchronized Attacks have the disadvantage of demanding an obscene amount of coordination and teamwork from everyone involved. Not so for you, one learned in maximizing other's input and carrying the brunt of the ordeal yourself.

Effect: When performing a Synchronized Attack, you only use your own Action.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP the Base Accuracy and Penetration of Synchronized Attacks initiated by you increase by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.



## Trick Dodge

Trick Dodge Upgrades are specialized sensors that give your unit a chance to evade attacks that should have by all regards hit you at the cost of Energy. This is a special effort from your unit to try and evade an attack by various special means, varying in effectiveness and energy cost. Only one Trick Dodge upgrade may be used per Enemy attack, and only once per Attack.

### Jammer

Areas: Any

Cost: 5

Description: You are equipped with a system that outright redirects Missiles directed at you.

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you with a Missile type weapon, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d10. On a roll equal to or higher than the Accuracy of the Gear plus that of the Weapon that attacked you, you successfully evade it.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP you gain an Advantage to the roll.

### Blocking

Areas: Core or Arms

Cost: 5

Description: You can track and read melee combat like no other thanks to your equipment.

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you with a Melee type weapon, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d10. On a roll equal to or higher than the Accuracy of the Gear plus that of the Weapon that attacked you, you successfully evade it.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP you gain an Advantage to the roll.

## ECS

Areas: Torso

Cost: 7

Description: Unlike other Trick Dodge upgrades, the Electronic Cloaking System is not so much a sensor but the counter to it; an advanced array of rapidly oscillating lasers used to foil most conventional sensing equipment, from infrared to common optics. This proves to be a much better idea on paper than it is in practice, as giant robots still leave giant footprints, produce tremendous noise, and distort the background so much it is almost comical. Still, great for confusing a foe and their auto-tracking armaments in a pinch.

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d10. On a roll equal to or higher than the Accuracy of the Gear plus that of the Weapon that attacked you, you successfully evade it.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP you may add +1 to the roll. You may purchase this Enhancement up to four times.

## TRC

Areas: Torso

Cost: 10

Description: The Tracking and Response Computer is an amazing system that compensates for an overwhelmed Actor's rising difficulties to keep them out of harm's way in the heat of battle, taking advantage of the smallest of openings in an enemy's attack and moving the entire Gear for them. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a free lunch. The system is intensive on the frame and reserves of Gygravagnite, requiring a lot of space and power to be used.

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d10 + Half your Tension (rounded up). On a roll equal to or higher than Accuracy of the Gear plus that of the Weapon that attacked you, you successfully evade it.

Enhancements: For an additional 10 UP, you may spend an additional 1 Energy and add all of your Tension to the roll instead.

## Protective Barrier

Protective Barriers lower Damage received or even nullify it entirely, but at the cost of Energy. All Barriers have limitations, however, and can only block certain types of attacks. Only one Protective Barrier upgrade may be used per Attack, and only once per Attack.

### Portable Shield

Areas: Arms

Cost: 5

Description: A smaller Gravagne Field that may protect you in a single direction. Though there is a limit to how much it can take, and it lacks enough output to nullify enemy Gravagne Fields, they ironically fare much better at stopping close range attacks and are considerably more efficient against multiple small enemies than the real thing, but fail to stop very powerful finishers.

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage by a Melee Weapon, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Attack by 5.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP, this Upgrade increases Armor by 7 instead.

### Beam Cancellor

Areas: Torso

Cost: 7

Description: Because of the power found in Beam weapons and their subsequent popularity, a special variant of the Gravagne Field easier on the Gear was developed to lessen their effectiveness. Though it still requires constant energy to maintain the shielding effect, it is much easier to sustain as well.

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage by a Beam Weapon, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Attack by 5.

Enhancements: For an additional 3 UP, you may spend an additional 1 Energy to increase your Armor by 10 instead.

### Friction Field

Areas: Torso

Cost: 10

Description: A special nanomachine bubble increases air density around your Gear on contact with high velocity physical objects, thereby offering a small degree of protection from the majority of weaponry.

Effect: When attacked by Melee, Ballistic or Missile Weapons, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Attack by 5.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP you may spend an additional 1 Energy to increase your Armor by 10 instead.

## Gravagne Field

Areas: Torso

Cost: 10

Description: An extremely powerful Barrier that has one unfortunate fatal flaw, being canceled by another nearby Gravagne Field, rendering them useless in close quarters against another Gear equipped with such technology.

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage by any source, except from an Enemy equipped with a Gravagne Field at Range 0 or 1, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that attack by 7.

Enhancements: For an additional 10 UP, this Upgrade increases Armor by 10 instead, and you may spend an additional 1 Energy to shield you even from Units equipped with other Gravagne Fields.





## Aid Another

Aid Another Upgrades provide an Ally with support and cover in various situations, either by the Actor's skill or the Gear's equipment.

### Battlefield Commander

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: Often it isn't about whose team had the best battle plan, but whose plan was more adaptable. It is your job to make sure that your team can make the most from the uncertainties present in raging combat.

Effect: You may use the Cooperate Action, with double your Tension bonus, to the benefit any other Ally once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

### Expert Enabler

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: Just because your intention is to help an Ally land a hit it does not mean your own shot should miss.

Effect: When using the Assist action you may add your Weapon's Accuracy and Penetration bonuses to the Test once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

### Guardian Maneuver

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: Your complex defensive piloting makes it harder for enemies to hurt your allies as well as yourself.

Effect: When using the Maneuver action you may extend the bonus to all Allies within Range 1, once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

### Sacrifice

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: You can take the heat in place of someone else, who more likely than not can't take it at all.

Effect: You may take Damage in place of an Ally within Range 1, at the same Damage level your Ally would have taken, once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

## Support Fire

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: Interfering in a Duel might get you frowned at, but it might also save an Ally's bacon.

Effect: You may Attack an Enemy that is in a Duel without running the risk of hitting your Ally once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

## Support

Support Upgrades enable your unit to support others in the battlefield by performing quick repairs and handing off extra ammunition or fuel during a battle. An Unit with Support Upgrades may use them on itself.

### Jury Rig

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Description: You carry a dispenser of fast-repair nanomachines and enough metaphorical (or literal) duct tape to hold your battle-ridden allies together.

Effect: As an Action, you may restore 1d10 points to your Threshold or to that of any one non-Base Unit within Range 1, once per Operation. This may not restore the Unit's Threshold past a lost Level.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP, you may use this action another time per Operation. You may purchase this enhancement twice.

### Reload

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Description: Ever wanted to be the guy carrying a hilariously large amount of ammo in his backpack? Now you can.

Effect: As an Action, you may repair and redeploy your broken Remote Weapons and permit your One-Shot Weapons to be fired again after they have been used once, or do the same to any one non-Base Unit within Range 1, once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP, you may use this action another time per Operation. You may purchase this enhancement twice.

### Resupply

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Description: You have with you spare Element G crystals, traditional capacitors and maybe even literal fuel to, well, refuel allies in need.

Effect: As an Action, you may restore 1d5 points to your Energy or to that of any one non-Base Unit within Range 1, once per Operation. This may not grant Energy past the Unit's normal maximum value.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP, you may use this Action another time per Operation. You may purchase this enhancement twice.

## Special Mode

Special Modes are upgrades that boost your capabilities considerably, you may activate them at will but they always come at a price. During your Beginning Phase you may activate any Special Mode and you may deactivate them during any Beginning Phase thereafter. You may only have one Super Mode upgrade active at a time, and activating a second automatically cancels the first. A Special Mode may not be activated more than once per Operation.

### The Beast

Areas: Core

Cost: 3

Description: Your Gear becomes an unstoppable rampaging monster that lays siege to everything under its foot.

Effect: When using a Melee Weapon you attack everything within 1 Zone from you with a single Test, but you may only use Weapons with a maximum Range of 1.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP whenever you have this ability activated, you impart a Disadvantage to any offensive Tests made against you with a Melee Weapon.

### Telescopic Sights

Areas: Core

Cost: 3

Description: Your Unit adopts a sniper mode, all ranged Weapons greatly increase in range but you are now firmly braced and cannot movement for prolonged periods of time.

Effect: Your Ballistic, Beam and Missile type Weapons gain +1 to their maximum Ranges if they had a maximum Range higher than 1. For as long as this mode is activated, you may not Move at all.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP after this ability activates the bonus to maximum Ranges is of +2 instead.

### Limiter Release

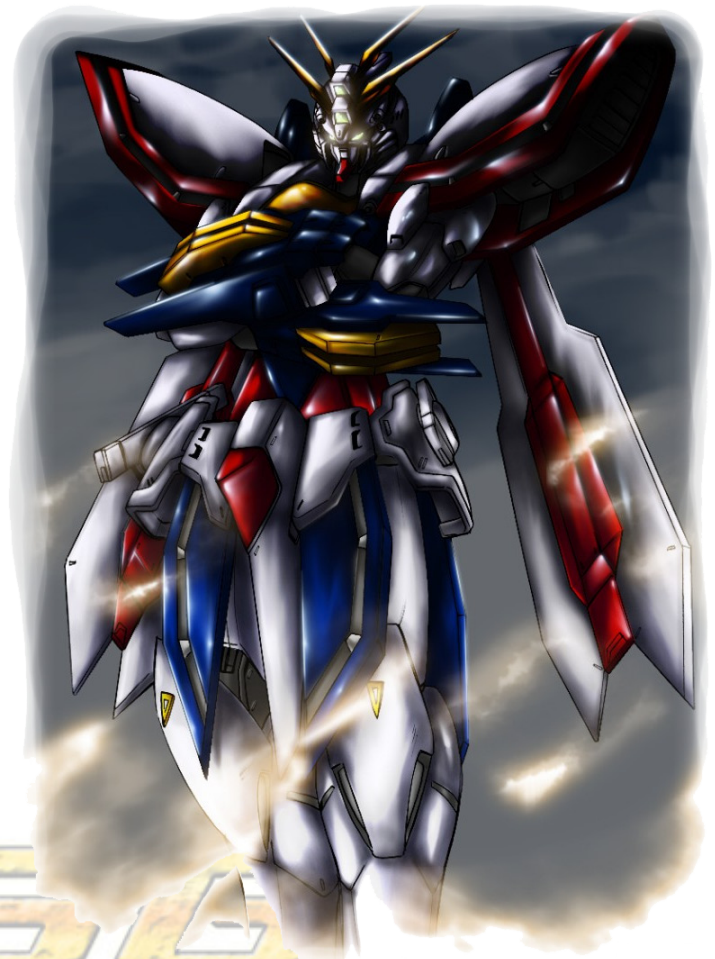
Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Description: You can push the engine to its limits and over-clock it to continue getting mileage out of it but at risk of things spiraling out of control in an explosive fashion.

Effect: Regenerate 1d10 Energy at the end of your Turn, but you also take that much Damage.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP whenever you have this ability activated you take half that much Damage instead, rounding up.



### Fortress of Steel

Areas: Core

Cost: 7

Description: You adopt a defensive stance that makes you much tougher to hurt, and sets you up for lethal counter attacks.

Effect: Set your Evasion to 0 and add the lost Evasion to your Armor.

Enhancements: For an additional 3 UP while this is activated, if you take the Delay Action for offensive purposes and the same Enemy fails to Damage you, you gain an Advantage to your Counterattack.

### Three Times Faster

Areas: Core

Cost: 7

Description: By increasing your energy output times three, you reach previously unseen levels of speed and maneuverability.

Effect: You gain +5 to your Evasion, for as long as this ability remains activated you lose 2 Energy at the end of every one of your Turns. If you don't have 2 Energy to maintain this mode, you lose all of your remaining Energy and it ends.

Enhancements: For an additional 3 UP you gain +5 to the Accuracy of all your Weapons as well, but the loss of Energy per Turn is of 3.



## Terrain Adaptability

Terrain Adaptability upgrades allow your unit to perform better under particular terrain conditions or to nullify penalties from them, giving you an advantage over enemies that lack them.

### Extremophile

Areas: Torso

Cost: 1

Description: Your Gear is prepared to deploy in some of the most inhospitable places known to man.

Effect: You ignore all Threshold loss from Extreme Terrain by spending 1 Energy for each instance, even if you do not spend any Energy said Damage is halved (rounding down).

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you ignore all damage from Extreme Terrain at no Energy cost.

### Maglev

Areas: Torso or Legs

Cost: 1

Description: You can float over land and sea, and treat them as a completely flat surface, forgetting about any inconveniences they might have presented.

Effect: You do not suffer the effects of Difficult Terrain. This ability does not work underwater or in space.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you and you may Move an additional Zone after your Action by spending 1 Energy in applicable Terrain.

### Marine Module

Areas: Torso or Legs

Cost: 1

Description: Not only are you not hindered by aquatic environs, but you actually perform better in them.

Effect: You do not suffer the effects of aquatic Difficult Terrain, be it over or under water.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you may Move an additional Zone after your Action by spending 1 Energy in aquatic Terrain.

### Vernier Thrusters

Areas: Torso or Legs

Cost: 1

Description: 0 G is difficult to get used to for most, but you can outperform them all.

Effect: In space Terrain, you may Move an additional Zone after your Action by spending 1 Energy.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you make the effects of this Upgrade permanent at no Energy cost.

### Anti-Gravity

Areas: Torso or Legs

Cost: 3

Description: Being flight-capable can easily make the difference in combat against a foe that lacks this capability.

Effect: During your Beginning Phase, you may spend 1 Energy to ignore the effects of Difficult Terrain, to be able to shoot through a Zone occupied by an Enemy as if they weren't there to reach another, and to Move an additional Zone after your Action. You may use any number of these effects per activation for a Round, unused effects do not carry over to your next Turn. This ability does not work underwater or in space.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you make the effects of this Upgrade permanent at no Energy cost.



## Potential

Upgrades of the Potential line carry great effects with them, but are expensive and trigger only after a battle has been going for a while.

### Bullseye

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 5

Description: Your ability to focus in the midst of all these explosions is incredible, and punishes greatly those who fail to keep up with the rising fervor.

Effect: When your Tension is of 10 or higher add 3 to your Accuracy Tests until end of Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP you add 7 instead.

### Frenzy

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 5

Description: In your battle lust you are prone to bursts of exceptional violence that leave nothing in their wake.

Effect: When your Tension is of 10 or higher, any time you roll a 10 on your Penetration Tests you automatically deal 10 Damage to the Enemy, until end of Operation. This bonus Damage bypasses Armor.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP this effect triggers on a roll of 8 or 9 as well, but only deals Damage equal to the number rolled.

### Foresight

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 5

Description: Your intuition is a thing of beauty, helping you predict and read your opponents like a charm even in the worst of crisis.

Effect: When your Tension is of 10 or higher you gain 10 Evasion against attacks that target your Unit directly until end of Operation. You are still vulnerable as normal to Blast and other area of effect Weapons.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP the bonus is applicable against all Weapons instead.

### Invincible

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 5

Description: You are well prepared to minimize inevitable damage and can maneuver so that the first thing that goes through your defenses only scratches your paintjob.

Effect: When your Tension is of 10 or higher you add half of your Tension to your Armor (rounding up) against Attacks at Range 5 or lower.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP, you may add all of your Tension against Attacks from Range 3 or lower instead.

## Variable Form

Variable Forms are not Upgrades of their own, but instead a way to facilitate the obtaining of additional purchases by placing conditions on when you can use them or giving you multiple 'chassis types' with their own unique held Upgrades. Variable Form Upgrades are going to require multiple character sheets for all their versions. You may alternate between these sets to gain the benefit of either of them as the situation calls for it. You may obtain additional Transformation Modes and Frames after purchasing the first one. Variable Forms may not hold other Variable Forms inside.

### Transform

Areas: Core

Cost: 5 per additional Transformation Mode, the Cost is applied to all Forms.

Description: Your Unit is a transformer with at least 2 forms, they can be similar to each other or they can be entirely different.

Effect: Your other Forms may have a different Chassis, Upgrades or Weapons in the Head, Torso, Arms and Legs but they all must share the same Design, Upgrades and Weapons in other Areas, as well as the same Common Enhancements. If you change to a form that has a higher maximum Energy or Threshold than your old one, your value remains as is, likewise any restored Energy or Threshold beyond what your new form can hold is lost. Maimed Areas will also carry over. You may purchase new instances of this Upgrade after the first. As an Action you may alternate between one form and another.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP per Transformation Mode, you may alternate between sets at the Beginning of your Turn without using an Action.

### Frames

Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the greater set of purchases plus 5 per the number of sets bought beyond the first, for a minimum of 5 points at two sets. You can turn preexisting Torso and Arms Upgrades into a set of Frames.

Description: You have modular equipment for your Torso and Arms that you can switch between Operations to specialize in as many things as you wish.

Effect: Purchase at least two 'sets' of Upgrades or Weapons and pay only the cost of the most expensive one. You may alternate between one set of Torso and Arms and another before deployment. You may expand the Upgrades held by all of your Frames after purchasing them. You may alternate Frames during Operations by spending a Round Docked within your Base. This will restore the Torso and Arms if they were Maimed, but will not heal lost Threshold. Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP per set beyond the first, you may use an Action to switch Frames with all the benefits that incurs. After trading away a Frame in this fashion you may not switch back to it in the same Operation.



## Sub Unit

Sub Units don't benefit your unit directly but instead provide you with a Subpilot or even helper Submecha to bestow additional abilities on that you can make use of later. A Submecha is by default automated and works much like a Remote Weapon. You may allocate additional Upgrades later to an existing Component or Aide after its purchase. As a special rule, you may create a Sub Unit that is both a Component and an Aide and shares the qualities of both types but also costs a minimum of 6 UP instead of 3, and Enhancing it costs 9 UP.

### Component

Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the total set of purchases plus 3 UP.

Description: You get a second pair of hands to help you out in the battlefield and may purchase Upgrades beyond the capacity of your areas by giving them a body of their own for your assistant to control, to later Combine with you. You may purchase new instances of this upgrade after the first.

Effect: Choose a set of Upgrades and designate them as a Component, ignoring all Area allocation restrictions. This Component may deploy at the beginning of your Turn without using an Action within a Zone of your Base, from you when the Operation begins, or deploy pre-Combined. This Component has a Subpilot NPC of their own, choose a Genre Power available to the four Natures, the Subpilot gains said Genre Power. Components have Evasion and Armor equal to half yours (rounding down), but share their Energy and Tension with you and their Threshold is of 0. Components may not hold upgrades or enhancements you already possess. You may take an Action to combine with all of your Components, granting your Unit all of their held Genre Powers, Upgrades and Enhancements, but the Component may be Maimed as any other Area after combining. This Combination may be undone with another Action.

Enhancements: For an additional 7 UP your Subpilot is trained to use the Cooperate Action during your Turn, and gains an Action to use to that effect.

## Aide

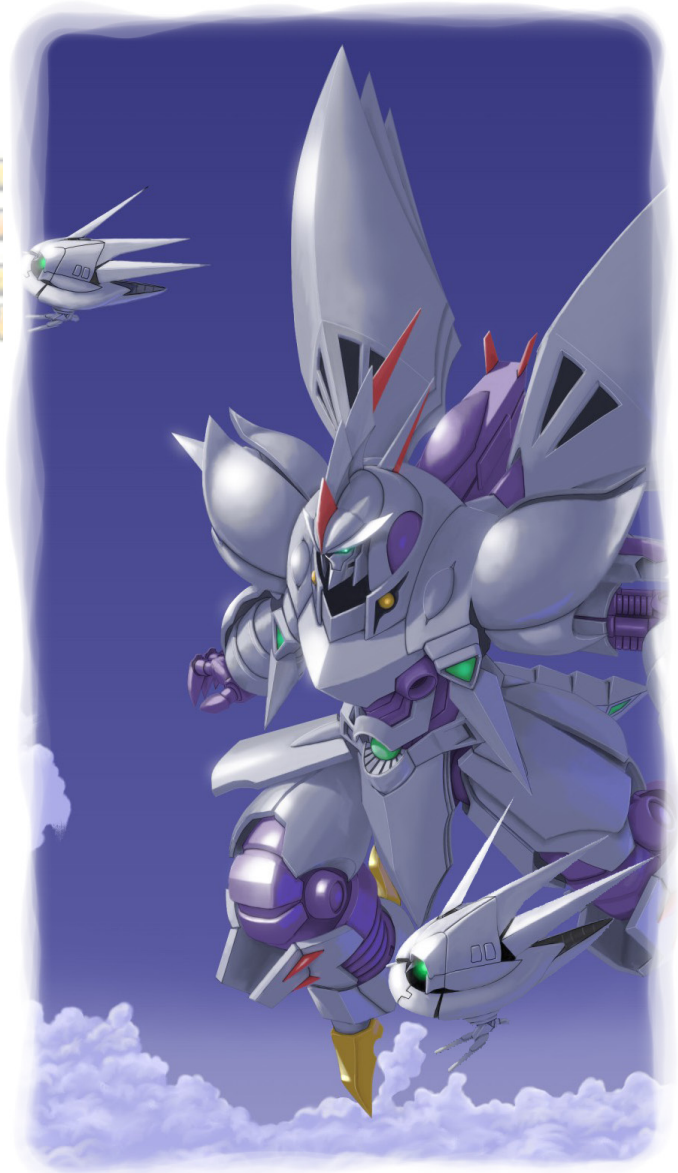
Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the total set of purchases plus 3 UP.

Description: You get your own helper robot buddy, though unmanned, it still requires you to control it remotely to be of use. You may purchase new instances of this upgrade after the first.

Effect: Choose a set of Upgrades and designate them as an Aide, ignoring all Area allocation restrictions. This Aide may deploy at the beginning of your Turn without using an Action within a Zone of your Base or from you when the Operation begins, an Aide may make full use of any Upgrades or Weapons held by them but must use your Actions to do so. An Aide has Evasion and Armor equal to half yours (rounding down), but share their Energy and Tension with you, and their Threshold is of 0. An Aide may not hold Upgrades or Enhancements you already possess, but receive benefits from your own Weapon Enhancements as normal.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP per Aide, the Aide gains an Action to use as its own.



## Teamwork

This is the Upgrade line that enables multiple PC Gears to crash together in a way that defies all logic and make a new robot that is stronger than the others, or to perform a choreographed display of offensive maneuvers that utterly decimate any foe standing before them. Combined Units may even have multiple forms capable of quickly decomposing and recombining to unleash a frenzy of continued attacks, as many as its number of individual Gears.

### Combination

Areas: None

Cost: 10

Description: You and one or more allies join forces to create a new fully powered up unit with the best that the group has to offer.

Effect: As an Action you may combine your mech with a willing Ally's that is within a Zone of distance. Your are now treated as a single Unit, with everyone having access to the combined allies' Genre Powers and using the highest Basic Mechanics among the individual combined Units, this new Unit is at its full Threshold and Energy, may treat any One-Shot, Technique or Recharging Weapons as if they hadn't been used by the original Units, and is healed of any impairing Conditions. Only the Actor with this Upgrade may take Actions with the Combined Unit and benefits only from their own Gear's Upgrades and Weapons, with combined Allies being unable to do much else other than use the Co-operate Action. You may decombine this Unit with an Action of your own, returning to your previous status and redeploying within a Zone from each other.

Enhancements: You may purchase fully Enhanced Upgrades for their base UP Cost and Weapons for half their Cost (rounding up), but you may only use them while Combined.

Special: For every Ally who purchases this Upgrade and spends an Action to help combine, they may transform the combined Unit during their Beginning to one they may control directly and can take an Action to use it as normal, but only receive the benefit of their own Upgrades and Weapons.

### Killing the Mood

Not every Upgrade fits into every kind of game, and for this reason you should ask your GM whether the Upgrade in question you desire would be proper or not.

Some Upgrades are more obvious suspects than others, while having access to Gravnage Fields or Air Rods might be questionable at times, the Combination Upgrade is probably the most obvious offender as not only can it entirely ruin a game's tone if the GM intends it to be gritty but it also needs approval from one or more members of the group to actually combine.

However this could also apply to more mundane Upgrades and even Weapons - maybe you are undergoing a Gygravagnite embargo and the manufacture of further Beam Weapons is forbidden - these are obviously a case-by-case issue but nonetheless serve just as well to state that it never hurts to ask.

## Synchro Attack

Areas: None

Cost: The average cost of the Weapons in the combination, rounding up. To use this Weapon all participants involved must spend between them an amount of Genre Points equal to the Cost of the Weapon, they may spread this cost as they wish.

Description: Nothing else approximates the power of multiple Units adding their powers together.

Effect: Choose one of your Weapons and another Weapon from each Ally willing to Synchro, whomever has purchased the Synchronized Attack may use it and will require one Action from every participant in addition to his own to do so. This new Weapon has the range of the user's Weapon and its Special qualities, but the Accuracy and Penetration is that of the total of all Weapons combined. This counts as attacking with their individual Weapons for the rest of the group and they must expend all appropriate resources as normal, if those Weapons cannot be used against that Enemy then the Synchronized Attack may not be used either. The same Unit may not use the Synchro Attack more than once per Operation.

Enhancements: For the same cost that the Weapon was purchased for, the Synchronized Attack does not require the expenditure of Genre Points.

Special: For every other Ally that purchases this Synchro Attack, they may initiate its use as well.





## Common Enhancements

Common Enhancements increase your unit's Base Mechanics. Since these are not actually Upgrades but Enhancements, they do not take up space and may not be purchased during the initial assembling of your Gear.

### Evasion Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 1

Description: The joints can be improved to respond faster to commands as they are input.

Effect: Gain +1 to your base Evasion.

Further Enhancements: May be taken up to five times.

### Armor Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 1

Description: Existing layers of armor can be subdivided and multiplied for additional defense without increasing bulk.

Effect: Gain +1 to your base Armor.

Further Enhancements: May be taken up to five times.

### Energy Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 1

Description: Upgraded management systems can allow your unit to get the most of its juice.

Effect: Gain +1 to your base Energy.

Further Enhancements: May be taken up to five times.

### Threshold Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 1

Description: Backup internal systems can protect the unit from the rigors of combat.

Effect: Gain +1 to your base Threshold.

Further Enhancements: May be taken up to five times.

### Accuracy Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 2

Description: Targeting systems can always be fine-tuned even more to the specifics of the user.

Effect: Gain +1 to your Base Accuracy.

Further Enhancements: You may purchase this Enhancement a total of five times.

### Penetration Enhancement

Areas: None

Cost: 2

Description: You pack superior munitions and custom made weapons. It is costly but more than worth it.

Effect: Gain +1 to your Base Penetration.

Further Enhancements: You may purchase this Enhancement a total of five times.

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## Gear Weapons Format

### Name of the Weapon

Areas: When you purchase an Upgrade or Weapon you must **allocate it to one of your unit's Areas** (Core, Torso, Arms, Head or Legs) and **should that Area be Maimed as a result of Damage any Upgrades or Weapons allocated to it will stop to function for the rest of the Operation** and cannot be repaired unless an ability specifically mentions it may do so. **The Core cannot be Maimed**, but many purchases have limited areas they can be allocated to, and the Core is rarely applicable. **Upgrades with an Area of 'None' do not take any Capacity**, and are only listed down to help you track expenditures of UP.

Cost: How much UP must be spent to purchase the Upgrade or Weapon in question, **an Upgrade or Weapon will use up an amount of 'space' in the Area equal to its Cost**. If an Area would go over its Capacity by the purchase of the Upgrade or Weapon in question, it may not allocate the Upgrade or Weapon to that Area.

Range: The **minimum and maximum effective ranges of the Weapon**. Remember that distances and movement are abstracted, using a Weapon without moving from an area to another by the rules does not mean you remain still while you attack, merely that you get back in position after your striking the foe.

Accuracy: The **bonus the Weapon adds to Accuracy Tests** when used, in addition to the Gear's own Accuracy.

Penetration: The **bonus the Weapon adds to Penetration Tests** when used, in addition to the Gear's own Penetration.

Energy: The **required number of Energy that the Weapon spends with each use**. Much like with Upgrades, if you do not have enough Energy, you may not use the Weapon.

Special: Any unique properties of the Weapon, such as its damage type, Keyword abilities, and unique non-keyworded abilities. Damage type is only relevant against certain defensive Upgrades.

Description: A flavor interpretation of what the Upgrade does in-universe. The presented explanation is only a default that you may modify at your leisure, as long as the GM approves, of course.

## Weapon Special Keyword Abilities

**Blast:** Some Weapons make really, really big explosions. Blast Weapons don't attack an Enemy but instead target an individual Zone and make a single Accuracy and Penetration Test against all targets within Range 1 from it, regardless of whether they are friend or foe, but they will not cause you to hurt yourself.

**Mobile:** This Weapon is light or simple enough that you may Move in any direction before using it. The target must remain within a valid range after moving, though.

**One-Shot:** Even if they don't use Energy, many Weapons have limited uses, for whichever reason. One-Shot Weapons may be only fired once per Operation.

**Recharging:** These Weapons are too powerful for their own reliability, and may only be fired once every other Turn.

**Reliable:** Some Weapons usually fare that much better than others. Reliable Weapons are so good they have an innate Advantage to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

**Remote:** Remote Weapons aren't wielded by the Gear but instead are deployed and attack separately, you may deploy them within one Zone from you at the beginning of your Turn or at the start of an Operation, and may retrieve them the same way.

Remote Weapons have an Evasion and Armor equal to yours, a Threshold of 0, and run off your own Energy and Tension. Remote Weapons can Move and perform Actions individually, but they require your direct control and use your own Actions to do so. They don't suffer movement restrictions with their offensive use as if they were Mobile, and they have an in-built Advantage to attacking any Units that aren't other Remote Weapons due to their smaller size.

**Technique:** Techniques are special attacks stronger than normal weapons, but are difficult to pull off repeatedly as the Enemy is already going to see them coming. These Weapons do not benefit from Tension to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests if used more than once against the same Enemy during an Operation.

## Conditions

Certain Weapons have the "Condition" Special ability, and when they inflict at least 1 Damage they will impair the Enemy with an unique statistical penalty.

**Condition (EMP):** The Enemy may not use Offensive Actions for a Round.

**Condition (Power Down):** The Enemy loses Energy equal to the Damage dealt at the beginning of their next Turn.

**Condition (Chain Reaction):** The Enemy suffers the same amount of Damage taken at the beginning of their next Turn.

**Condition (Immobilize):** The Enemy's Base Evasion is halved (rounding down) for a Round.

**Condition (Expose):** The Enemy's Base Armor is 0 until an attack Damages them.

**Condition (IFF Failure):** The Enemy loses their bonuses from Tension to Accuracy and Penetration Tests for a Round.



## Weapons

Every Gear starts with one Default Weapon that is not written in its statistical block. Since it is a very bad Weapon, it is recommended you do not actually rely on it and purchase additional Weapons instead.

### Slam

Areas: Core

Cost: 0

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, Using this Weapon inflicts half the amount of Damage dealt on the Enemy back to yourself, rounding down.

Description: More a desperation measure rather than a proper weapon, whatever it is that remains of your Gear you at least know that you can bump and crash into the enemy if absolutely necessary.

### Melee Type

Melee Weapons are the bread and butter of most Gear, being cheap and powerful. Their downside is their short range, their use of your arms, and the energy cost that the more powerful ones carry with them.

### Close Quarters Combat

Areas: Arms or Legs

Cost: 1

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: +1

Energy: 0

Special: Melee

Description: For as long as your unit has limbs, it can put the hurt on any enemies foolish enough to think of it as disarmed.

### Heavenly Wind

Areas: Any Non-Core and Non-Torso

Cost: 1

Range: 1-2

Accuracy: +1 plus 1 per every 5 total points of Upgrades allocated to the same Area

Penetration: +1 plus 1 per every 5 total points of Upgrades allocated to the same Area

Energy: 1

Special: Melee, Using this Weapon will down you a Level of Threshold and Maim the Area it is located on, but deal bonus Damage equal to the Threshold you lost this way.

Description: You detach one of your Mecha's limbs and send it to crash against an enemy. Understandably not a favorite of the repair teams, but amazing if you happen to have a lot of spares.

### Drill

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 2

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Melee

Description: One of the many wonders of Gears is that they somehow turned giant construction tools into formidable Weapons worth mass producing and mounting somewhere on your robot.

### Dueling Blade

Areas: Arms

Cost: 2

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, This Weapon suffers a Disadvantage when not used to Engage or during a Duel.

Description: A thrust-attack bladed weapon, while not as generally useful as beam-powered melee equipment, it remains a formidable implement of Gear-scale murder for those that know how to keep their enemies pinned reliably.

### Ensnaring Wires

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 2

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, Technique, Condition (Immobilize)

Description: Not so much a Weapon as it is a combat aid, foes will be webbed and trapped on being hit for a short while until they're able to break free.

### Beam Saber

Areas: Arms

Cost: 2

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +4

Energy: 1

Special: Melee

Description: A favorite of Duelists for its low energy consumption, compact size and overall practicality.

### Indirect Weapon

Areas: None

Cost: 3

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: +1

Energy: 1

Special: Melee, Remote

Description: All the benefits of your favorite Gear-scale implements of bloodshed now available as autonomous weapons.

### Rocket Punch

Areas: Arms

Cost: 3

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +2

Energy: 1

Special: Melee

Description: The Rocket Punch is a staple for those that like keeping to their fists even at range, even if it is more intensive on the unit than shooting a gun.

### Extending Punch

Areas: Arms

Cost: 3

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, for every additional 1 Energy spent on Extending Punch, increase its maximum Range by 2.

Description: A testament to the fact that if you stick enough nerds together in a room and dare them to make the most ludicrous concept a reality, they will succeed, this weapon simply uses a preposterous amount of Gygravagnite Types W and Y, ultra compressed and blended together to make what is, essentially, an entire limb out of nanomachines. When asked why would anyone ever want to do this when you've got perfectly serviceable firearms, their mysterious investor simply said "Because it is cool."

### Component Assault

Areas: Torso

Cost: 3

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: -

Penetration: -

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, This Weapon has an Accuracy and Penetration equal to the combined Base Accuracy and Penetration of all Units. Using this Weapon separates and requires an Action from all parts of a Combined Unit. Separated Units will be at the same Energy and Threshold values they had when they Combined. Those Units may not Combine again.

Description: As a last resort a Combiner may reverse the transformation mechanism and release all of its parts back into their original forms, all of them unleash a flurry of attacks at an unsuspecting foe, although the combination systems become useless until repaired from the strain.

### All-Out Attack

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 4

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +5

Penetration: +0

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, Technique, Condition (Chain Reaction)

Description: A brutal no-holds-barred rampage of melee attacks, the multitude of hits breaking down enemies in the following minutes even after the last one of them made impact. Those hit by this attack usually don't know it yet, but they are already defeated.

### Great Weapon

Areas: Arms

Cost: 4

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +4

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, When using this Weapon you may spend an additional 2 Energy to make it Reliable.

Description: A large energy Weapon that serves as an excellent finisher for weakened foes. Additional energy can be pumped into it for an extra oomph, increasing the size of the blade or even in the form of a beam that stuns the foe before cleaving them in twain.



### Radiant Fist

Areas: Arms

Cost: 5

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +0

Energy: 3

Special: Melee, Reliable, Technique, This Weapon gains double benefit from Tension to all Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: The ultimate in close range finishers, the unit's hands are equipped with an extremely damaging system, from electric colliders to a radiation pulse that glows with an awesome power.

### Gallant Kick

Areas: Legs

Cost: 6

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +7

Penetration: +3

Energy: 4

Special: Melee, Technique, You may add all of the surplus from your Accuracy Test to the subsequent Penetration Test with this Weapon instead of halving it.

Description: Few things have the style and potency of this attack, and similarly few are capable of reliably pulling it off. It is said to be the signature move of experienced aces that like to show off their skills.

### Ballistic Type

Ballistic Weapons offer an all-around arrange of costs, ranges and reliability of use at no energy cost or loss of efficiency from repeated uses. However, they are Corely weaker for their price than other Weapons and often suffer from very poor ammo capacity.

### Vulcans

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 1

Range: 0-4

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Mobile

Description: Weak but dependable, integrated Vulcans are there to make sure you have firepower when you are in a pinch.

### Revolving Cannon

Areas: Arms

Cost: 2

Range: 0-3

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +5

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Recharging.

Description: Stronger than the Vulcans and just as easy to produce, though the reloading process is quite the problem for the trigger happy Actors out there, its sheer power is not to be underestimated.

### Armor Breaker

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 2

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Technique, Condition (Expose)

Description: A single use, powerful projectile that is designed to tear down and destroy the armor of targets that it hits, though most Gears are equipped with countermeasures against such systems these days.

### Riot Weapon

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-2

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Mobile, One-Shot, Blast

Description: Sometimes you don't want staying power but to blow holes in everything nearby, in those situations claymore launchers or a Gear-scale shotgun will do the job.



### Light Machinegun

Areas: Arms

Cost: 3

Range: 0-3

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +2

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Mobile

Description: The standard issue in today's day and age, useful in all situations and as precise as it is damaging.

### Greater Bazooka

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 4

Range: 1-6

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +2

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Blast, Recharging

Description: One of those weapons that cause large explosions at great distances, it may not be a sniper's dream weapon but it is just *that* much fun.

### Heavy Railgun

Areas: Torso

Cost: 4

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +4

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Recharging

Description: A mounted and very phallic artillery device, it unfortunately may only carry a single projectile at a time and reloading it on the battlefield proves to be very difficult.

### Jackhammer Stake

Areas: Arms

Cost: 4

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +5

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, One-Shot, Reliable

Description: Bayonets haven't lost their use in this day and age, and they're even better when you use it to repeatedly pummel a foe with firepower as they're stuck to it..

### Resonance Cannon

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 4

Range: 0-8

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, One-Shot, Reliable. the Damage dealt by this Weapon after Armor has been applied is doubled.

Description: A sonic burst that shatters enemy Gears at their structural level. Though an unwieldy and gimmicky weapon, it is none the less scary to face, considering a mere graze can be as damaging as a direct hit.

### Long Rifle

Areas: Arms

Cost: 5

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic

Description: The battle-tested Weapon for snipers, with more than enough ammo to last until the operation's end, now with an alternate firing mode for those pesky enemies that break past the defense lines.

### Heavy Machinegun

Areas: Torso

Cost: 6

Range: 1-8

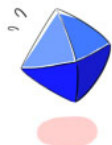
Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +6

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Blast, Should you roll a 1 on the Accuracy Test for this Weapon, it jams and the Attack fails automatically, the Weapon may not be used a gain until your next Turn.

Description: A Weapon capable of drowning enemies in munitions, and carrying enough bullets to be accused of trying to overcompensate for something. On the downside, it is inaccurate and the recoil is so terrible it needs to be mounted onto the Gear.





## Beam Type

Weapons of the Beam type are very powerful for their cost and come in all ranges. Their notable downside is that they are as deadly as they are hungry for your unit's operating power.

### Beam Rifle

Areas: Arms

Cost: 2

Range: 0-3

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +3

Energy: 1

Special: Beam

Description: Cheap to produce and easy to use, it makes a great all-purpose Weapon if you can get around its craving for energy.

### Beam Cannon

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-6

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +5

Energy: 2

Special: Beam

Description: A long range Weapon that can pierce through all but the most heavily armored of foes with ease.

### Ground Zero

Areas: Torso

Cost: 3

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +5

Penetration: +5

Energy: 3

Special: Beam, Technique. This Weapon attacks everyone within Range, including Allies, but not you. For every additional 1 Energy spent on Ground Zero increase its area of effect by 1.

Description: An offensive variant of the technology that would lead to the invention of the Type-G Gygravagnite and more precisely the Gravagne Field. You expel an insane amount of pure, raw Gygravagnite in a highly dangerous blast with you at its center, its only safe spot.

### Scattering Beam

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-2

Accuracy: +5

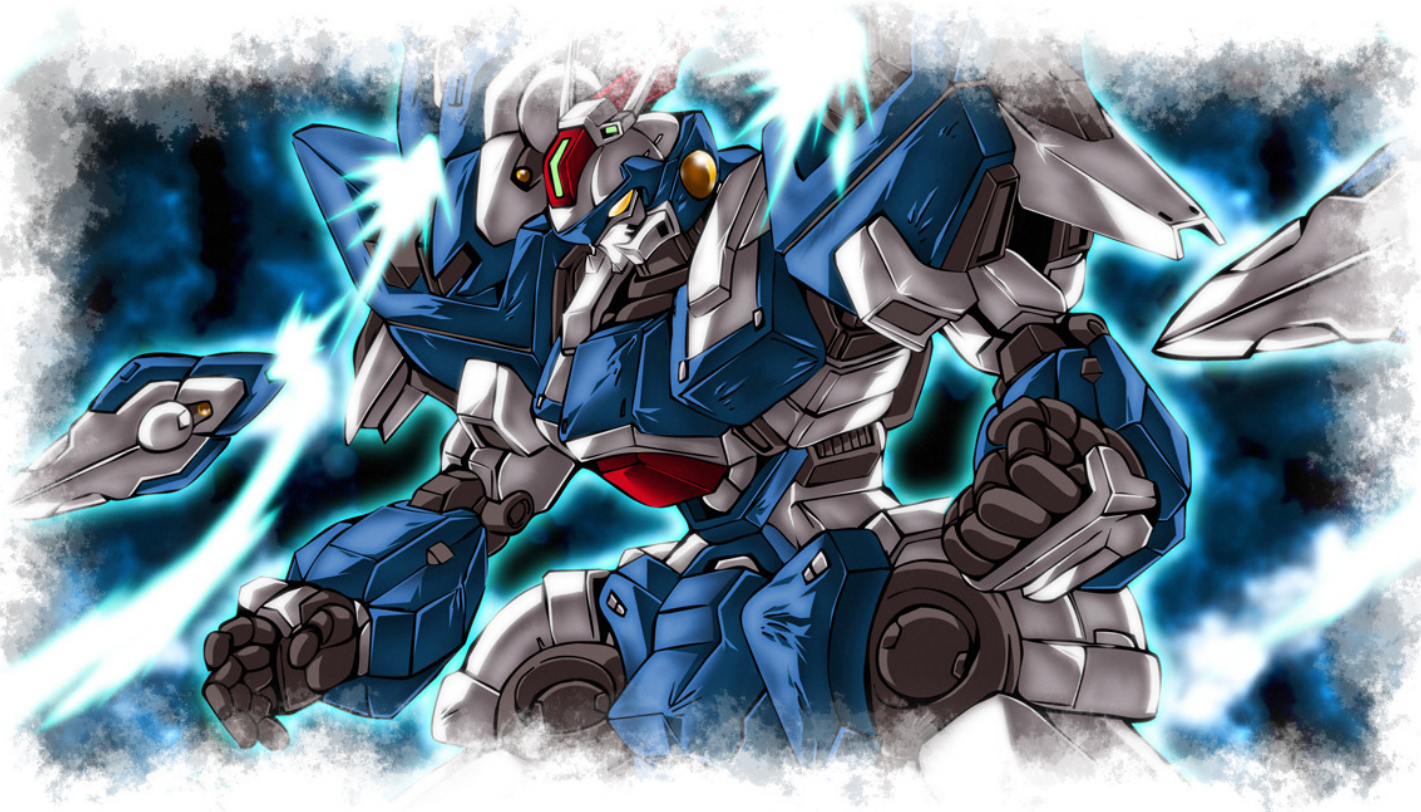
Penetration: +0

Energy: 3

Special: Beam, Blast

Description: A visually impressive lightshow that is incredibly difficult to evade once it has you in its sights, but will leave most Gears as sitting ducks after a few uses.

**GGG**  
GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



### Gunbarrels

Areas: None

Cost: 4

Range: 0-4

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +2

Energy: 2

Special: Beam, Remote

Description: Controlled by a combination of a Core's mind and wires, Gunbarrels lack in the ability to ambush or snipe foes like Bits do but they make up for it with maneuverability in skirmishes.

### Lux Cannon

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 4

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: Special

Penetration: +0

Energy: 4

Special: Beam. This Weapon's Accuracy is equal to the target's Evasion minus 5, and does not benefit from Tension though it does benefit from Accuracy Enhancements.

Description: A honest to God giant laser cannon. Though nowhere as destructive as other beam weapons it does have an unique advantage going for it – Dodging light is hard, no matter who you are. It is unfortunately prohibitive in the extreme to use, but does benefit from a downright ludicrous range as a trade off.

### Bits

Areas: None

Cost: 5

Range: 0-8

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 3

Special: Beam, Remote

Description: The most famous system of remote autonomous weapons, Bits excel at long distances with their incredible precision and highly penetrating condensed power.

### Incinerator

Areas: Torso

Cost: 5

Range: 1-2

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +4

Energy: 3

Special: Beam, Blast, Reliable, Technique

Description: Someone just had to devise the equivalent of a giant flamethrower, and though its output form may vary -chest beams seem highly popular for some reason- it always is just as energy-hungry as it is monstrously deadly to everything nearby.



### Giga Blaster

Areas: Torso

Cost: 6

Range: 2-8

Accuracy: +8

Penetration: +8

Energy: 6

Special: Beam, Blast, Reliable. This Weapon attacks everything in between the blast radius and you in a three-zone Column-shaped beam. Giga Blaster requires one Action be spent charging it, and its successful use will automatically make you lose your next Action afterwards. You do not need to declare the target until the moment of firing, only that you are about to use the Weapon, and may Move as normal while powering up as with any Offensive Action.

Description: Arguably the most powerful weapon any Gear could wield, leaving entire battlefields in ruins, it is amusingly enough a prototype of the Incinerators - it just happens to lack many of the safeties that kept the degeneracy chain of Gygravagnite in check. Just be careful with the forceful system reboot. And your unamused allies, too.



## Missile Type

Specializing in long range area of effect attacks and capable of disturbing an Enemy's functionality without using energy, Missile Weapons are generally expensive for their offensive power but make great artillery Weapons nevertheless.

### Linear Missile

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +5

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast, Technique.

Description: Designed for use against stationary targets, the Linear Missile is rather descriptive of its main flaw: it is comically easy to avoid – although the blast radius complicates matters a little.

### Split Missiles

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-4

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast

Description: Designed to deal with concentrations of smaller Boards and other weak foes in numbers, this twin pack of split missiles that split further into even more missiles will pepper an entire area with anti-personnel scale explosions.

### Interference Barrage

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 3

Range: 1-6

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, One-Shot, Condition (EMP)

Description: Twin split missiles that don't actually hit hard, but spread a very short lived cloud of disruptive electro-magnetism nearby whatever they hit that stops enemies in their tracks momentarily.

### Disturbance Cloud

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 4

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: +2

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast, One-Shot, Condition (IFF Failure) the Condition applies within the area of effect on a miss.

Description: A series of missiles that explode into a short lived cloud of particles that confuse the targeting systems of all enemies in the vicinity.

### Missile Pod

Areas: Arms

Cost: 4

Range: 1-5

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +4

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Mobile, One-Shot, Reliable

Description: A hand-held missile pod that shoots multiple homing projectiles at one unsuspecting foe.

### Micro Missiles

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 5

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +2

Energy: 0

Special: Missile

Description: A figurative circus of missiles that cruise the sky in a pattern that makes trying to evade them futile for the average unit, and impact from multiple angles at once making a direct critical hit that much more likely.

### Air Rods

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 5

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +5

Penetration: +0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, One-Shot, Condition (Power Down)

Description: Missiles tipped with compressed Type-G that home in on enemies by magnetic attraction, searching for the particular signature of Gygravagnite Type-R, and spread a disrupting interference on the impacted Gear's internals on impact, collapsing their reserves of Element G into useless minerals.

### Reaction Bomb

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 6

Range: 1-8

Accuracy: +5

Penetration: +5

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast, One-Shot. This Weapon has an increased area of effect of 1 additional Zone from the target and deals an additional 1d10 Damage to everything within the area of effect even if the attack misses. This Weapon may not be fired more than once even with the use of abilities that grant additional uses of One-Shot Weapons.

Description: For those times when you have to pull out all the stops, just point it at the center of the enemy forces and watch everything go up in flames.

## The Personal Touch

To truly make your Gear more than a really bland pile of mechanics for battle and little else, you are going to have to put some effort in giving it an unique description.

This step can be as superficial or crucial to the game as you want it to be. You could go to great effort to describe its unique equipment via appropriate technobabble but not give it any real relevance to the plot at large, or make it the successor of a series of ambitious but so far catastrophic projects and from there tie it to your PC's Themes.

It is up to you, and to the rest of the group, how much detail and cooperation you want put into this.

Remember to note everything down in the sheet for Mecha once you are done.

### Gear Details Questionnaire

What is the Gear's name? Is it part of an important series?  
What does the Gear look like? What are its most prominent distinguishing features?  
Does the Gear follow a theme? Is it alone in that or is it a group theme?  
Is the Gear brand new? Does it have a history?  
What is the Gear's theoretical role? Is it deemed a success, a failure, or simply the best the creators managed?  
Who built the Gear? Why are you its pilot?  
What are the Gear's armaments? Why is it equipped with them over other weaponry?  
How does the Gear handle? What would your PC change?  
Has the Gear been modified since being rolled out? If so, what was done to it?  
What is the Gear's best asset? What is the Gear's greatest weakness?

## Example of Gear Construction

Violet knows that everyone else has primarily short to medium range melee intensive Gears, and she too wants some of that face-to-face action, but, realizing that they're probably going to be torn apart by anything and everything that can shoot them before they get to it, Violet decides her Gear will also be able to play a supportive role.

Since her Faction Archetype is that of a Super Prototype, she moves on to choosing one of their available Designs and then a Chassis - A Dynamic type with an Experimental Gygravagnite Furnace. Violet tentatively names Michiko's Gear as Queen Minerva, alluding to her character's wisdom and refined talent for battle.

To cover her Unit's defenses, she considers the ECS Trick Dodge Upgrade, but since her Gear can't hold too many Upgrades in the Torso Area, she opts to instead get Blocking and Jammer - assigning them to the Core. She also assigns to the Legs the Jury-Rig and Resupply Upgrades to help herself out of a pinch or to lend a hand to others when necessary.

She has 14 UP left to spend, and she moves on to Minerva's offensive abilities. She begins with a Rocket Punch attack (that costs no Energy for her) as a nice all-around generic weapon, then adds a Beam Cannon in the Gear's Head for long range coverage - interpreted as eye beams. Violet thinks that Minerva could make use of a Blast Weapon, so she installs a Scattering Beam (an alternative mode of fire for the eye beams) and gets a Giant Tomahawk as a finisher - a Great Weapon.

Ingham looks over to check if everything is going alright, and notices that Violet is in no danger of crippling herself with an unfun, useless Unit. The eye beams are a very good combo with her reduced energy cost and her ability to repeat the Target Lock Genre Power, plus she can make up for her Gear's below-average Armor with liberal use of her Trick Dodge and even Unbreakable if it comes down to that.

The cosmetic and roleplay features of Queen Minerva are very much like those of General Z, but sleeker and more nimble. Ingham okays Violet's Unit combination and begins to make plans to throw long range enemies at the group so she has a chance to shine with a dramatic entrance.

### Tips n Tricks

Making your own Gear is more complicated and has more room for specialization than the creation of the Character proper, so it is much easier to get confused by all the options when you don't have a very specific concept to build. When this happens generally the best thing to do is to make a Gear that is good all-around and has some synergy with your Genre Powers.

A good place to start is to pick a defensive ability like a Protective Barrier or a Trick Dodge, though some Designs can function just like them. There will be a point in the battle in which Tension will make it impossible to dodge or soak Damage by normal means, and the more you can delay or sidestep it the better.

Next you want Weapons. It is recommended you have at least one Weapon that can be used at no risk of running out of juice and has decent range coverage, this can be one of the weaker machineguns or a higher tier missile, both work just fine. After you've got your bread and butter, now you can add more specialized and stronger ones, at least one with Blast and another that can be used in a Duel. You should not need more than 10 Points worth of Weapons, but make sure to spread them out between your Areas so you won't be stuck with Slam after a Maim or two.

The rest of your points should go towards utility Upgrades like the Exceptional Aptitudes that don't focus on specific Weapon types, then a Terrain Adaptability or a Special Mode as they all provide a considerable boost in performance.




Name Queen Minerva

XP Total

0

UP Spent

0

## Base Mechanics

Evasion

10

Accuracy

0

Nominal

1/1

Superficial

1/1

Armor

6

Penetration

0

Critical

1/1

Lethal

1/1

Energy

9

Active Powers

## Maim

## Mecha Details

Faster, support-oriented  
variant of General Z

## Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other	Enhancements
<u>10/20</u>	<u>6/10</u>	<u>0/10</u>	<u>8/10</u>	<u>6/10</u>		
Exp. G	B. Cannon		R. Punch	Jury Rig		
Jammer	Scatter. B		G. Weapon	Resupply		
Blocking						

## Upgrades

Name	Effect
Exp. G Furnace	Weapons cost 1 less En
Blocking	Roll <u>1/10</u> , dodge a Melee Weapon of lower Accuracy
Jammer	See above, but for Missiles
Jury-Rig	Restore <u>1/10</u> Threshold to you or another
Resupply	Restore <u>1/5</u> Energy to you or another

## Weapons

Name	Range	Accuracy	Penetration	Energy	Special
Beam Cannon	<u>2-4</u>	<u>+0</u>	<u>+5</u>	<u>1</u>	Beam
Scattering Beam	<u>1-2</u>	<u>+5</u>	<u>+0</u>	<u>2</u>	Beam, Blast
Rocket Punch	<u>0-2</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>+2</u>	<u>0</u>	Melee
Great Weapon	<u>0-1</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>1</u>	Melee, make Reliable for 2 En

# Ready-Made Gears

## HMR-003-2 Aegis Gravis

An upgrade and reconstruction of the original HMR-003 Aegis, this Gear was one of the first to be deployed against the Outsiders and, after a short break in action, it is now ready to be sent to the battlefield once more. Though what exactly happened to it -and its Actor- is unknown, the Unit is spoke of in both awed and hushed tones as it both managed to have enough of it left over to be rebuilt, yet has tasted the bitter flavor of a crushing defeat in the past.

Despite all of this, the Aegis Gravis is a great ally to have on the front line. Its main feature is being tough as nuts -as if the name wasn't any indication. No Actors will be given the controls to the Aegis Gravis without first being properly trained to properly cover his or her teammates, made easier now that the Gravis has been reinforced internally, with a number of Type-W Gygravagnite layers to test just how much punishment a single Gear can take, and externally, with the Type-G powered Gravagne Field.

The Aegis Gravis is not just a punching bag though. Any Outsider caught by its enormous right hand will receive several kilotons worth of stored ammo propelled by a jackhammer right into its face -or whichever unlucky area happened to be under it. This is unfortunately a single-use weapon that will require the Actors of the Aegis Gravis to make a trip to Mitsurugi's supply caches to reload, which they likely do not have the time for.

It does, however, possess a mounted and fully automatic 90mm Vulcan in its left wrist for those times when it cannot quite afford to tactically retreat and it needs to fill something or someone with holes; this time with plenty of ammunition to spare. Prospective Actors should be wary. Anyone who relies too much on its tough hide to save their allies may see themselves martyred, as the Aegis Gravis almost seems to be powered by dramatism.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	8	8	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 10/15	Head 3/10	Torso 10/15	Arms 7/10	Legs 0/10
Internal Fortification	Sacrifice	Gravagne Field	Light Machinegun	
Shield of the Meek			Jackhammer Stake	



## HMR-007 Hirameki

The Hirameki is not just any experimental machine with one-of-a-kind internals and issued equipment as part of its design, it is a machine that was almost overdesigned with as many gadgets the research division could find as humanly possible. It could be that this is no more than coincidence, a plan to make use of its natural celerity to render it a lure for Outsiders, or mayhaps it was simply a designer's nerd glee gone overboard.

Its most obvious feature is its Type-G 'Gygravagnite Furnace,' apparently the only successful copy of the Wagner's own reactor built though the smaller size reduces its potency greatly. Why they are so difficult to craft ihas never officially stated but any Actors are to be reassured that it is not dangerous.

It was the first Gear developed with both Rocket Punch and Air Rod technology as viable weapons, and the research teams are particularly proud of those. They will talk on and on about the former, but trying to get them to explain how the later works is a quest unto itself, evidently involving more of the information available on Type-G than it is in their best interest to reveal.

More interesting perhaps is its ability to continually accelerate even after an abrupt change in direction thanks to its Anti-Gravity Board, the first such Anti-Gravity system designed for Gear use. The system is complex enough to reach extreme velocities and peform erratic movement patterns that place little to no pressure on the super light frame of the Hirameki.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
12	4	6	10	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 10/15	Head 5/10	Torso 5/10	Arms 3/15	Legs 3/10
Experimental G-Furnace	Air Rods	Ground Zero	Rocket Punch	Anti-Gravity
Foresight			Missile Pod	
Jammer				

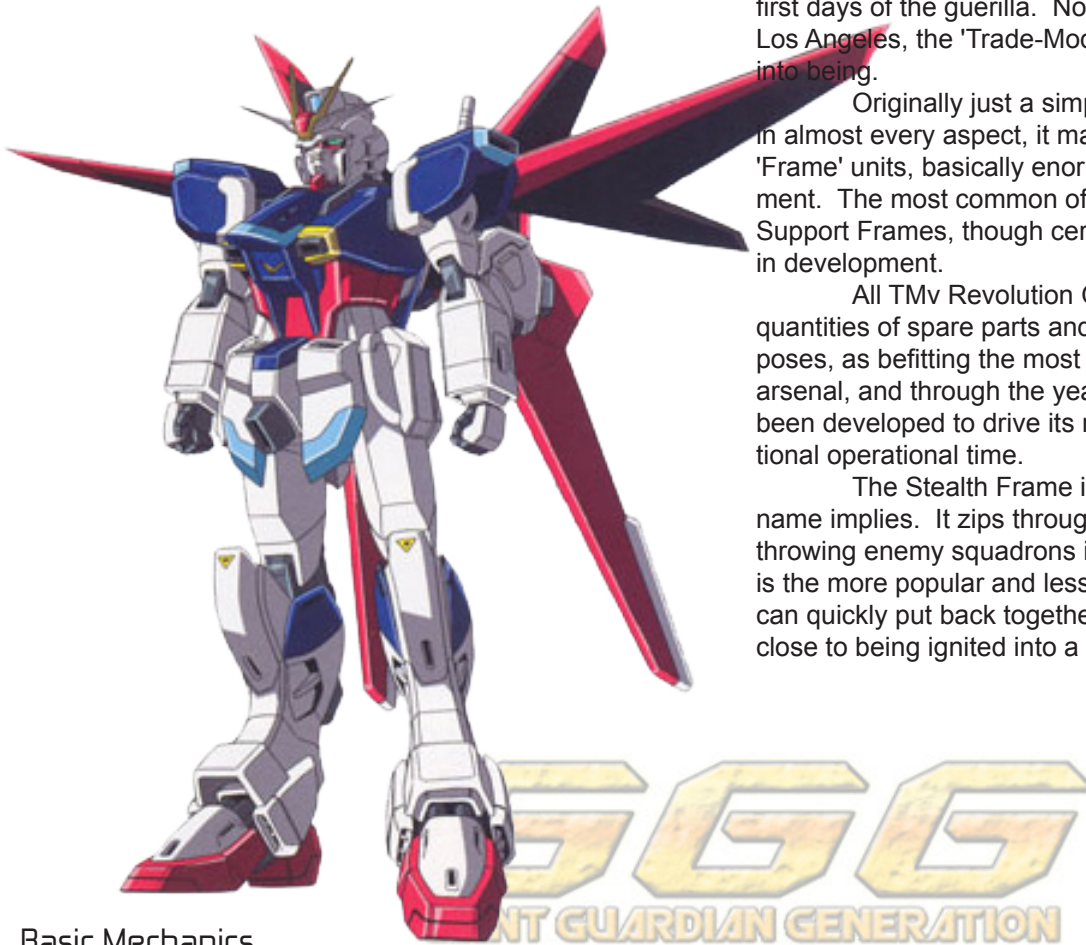
## BGM-001-TMv Revolution

The Revolution used to be the mainstay of the RUF in the first days of the guerilla. Not too long after the recovery of Los Angeles, the 'Trade-Module version' Revolution came into being.

Originally just a simple all-purpose suit, average in almost every aspect, it may now invoke one of several 'Frame' units, basically enormous suits of modular equipment. The most common of which are the Stealth and Support Frames, though certainly more exist and continue in development.

All TMv Revolution Gears benefit from having vast quantities of spare parts and equipment for emergency purposes, as befitting the most common Gear in the RHUF's arsenal, and through the years a variety of methods have been developed to drive its reactors to the limit for additional operational time.

The Stealth Frame is an interference unit like the name implies. It zips through the battlefield like a meteor, throwing enemy squadrons into chaos. The Support Frame is the more popular and less gimmicky of the two, and it can quickly put back together a Gear that is dangerously close to being ignited into a vestige of careless Enacting.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

### Stealth Frame

Core 5/20	Head 1/10	Torso 9/10	Arms 10/10	Legs 0/10	Other 5
Mass Produced	Vulcans	ECS	Great Weapon		Frames
Limiter Release		Armor Breaker	Disturbance Cloud		
			Revolving Cannon		

### Support Frame

Core 5/20	Head 1/10	Torso 9/10	Arms 10/10	Legs 0/10	Other 5
Mass Produced	Vulcans	Anti-Gravity	Micro Missiles		Frames
Limiter Release		Jury-Rig	Scatter Beam Array		
		Resupply	Revolving Cannon		

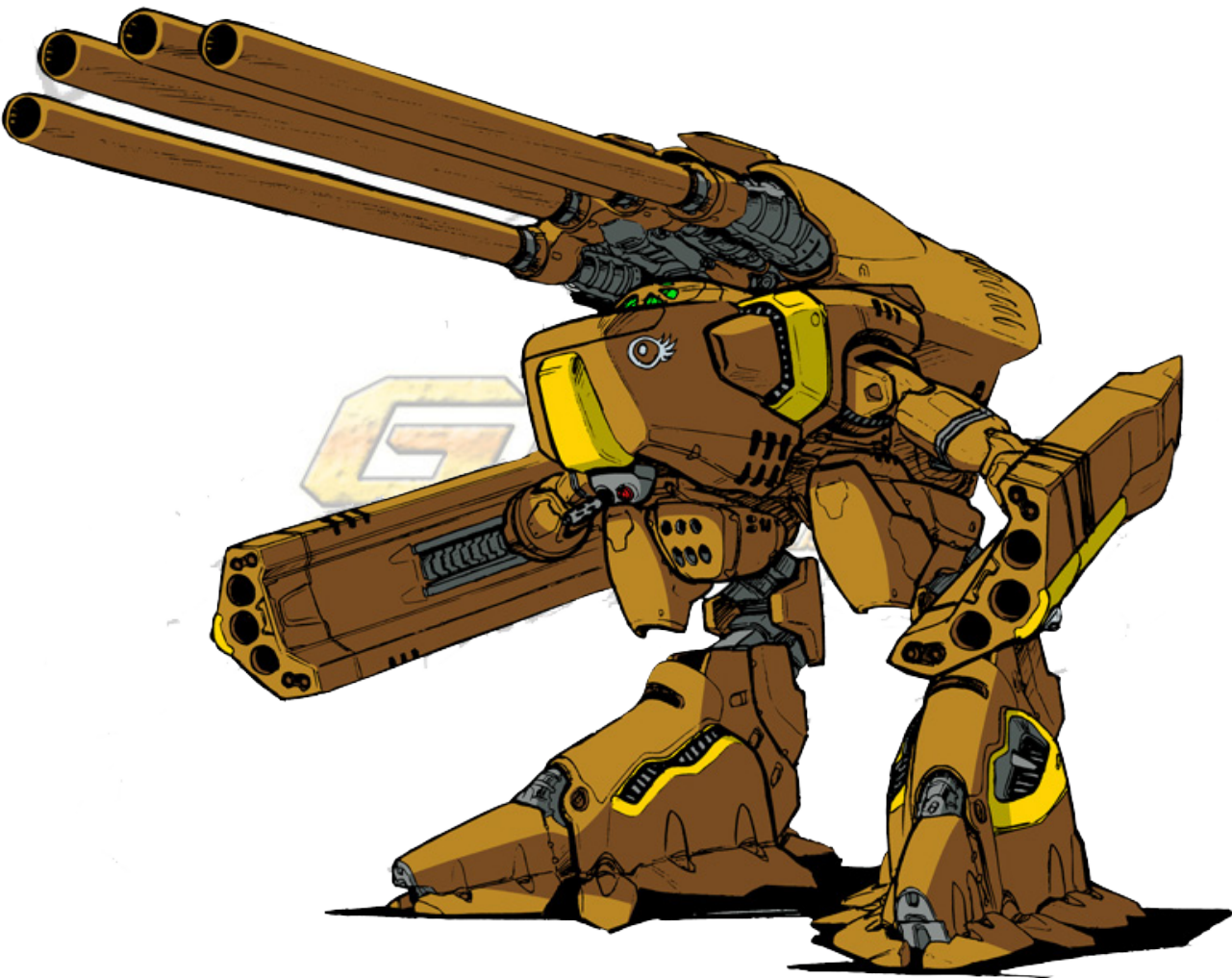


BGM-005 Penderecki

The ultimate in Support Fire, the Penderecki is seen by Gear romanticists as a crude and barely-mobile weapons platform, but its sheer usefulness proves that sometimes aesthetics can and should take a back seat. A single Penderecki can cover for multiple Gears at once and multiples of them can unleash a apocalyptic symphony of firepower that will destroy entire enemy platoons in minutes.

The Penderecki's main strength is also its biggest flaw. It is an unfortunate one-trick pony that loses many of the benefits of adaptability that Gears are supposed to benefit from, but it packs so many guns and is engineered to make so much out of every one of them that the risk is very much worth it.

Partly this is because while the Penderecki is far from being an agile Gear, it is very much so a sturdy one. Because it is expected that every enemy out there will do its best to remove it from interfering further, its learning computer has been optimized to make sure that any offending targets are destroyed with a giant flamethrower to the face once enough data has been gathered on them.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

Area Capacity

Core 3/10	Head 10/10	Torso 9/15	Arms 4/15	Legs 4/10
Ammo Efficient	Bullseye	Incinerator	Beam Rifle	Resupply
Telescopic Sights	Invincible	Greater Bazooka	Revolving Cannon	Vulcans

UHDS-001 Wagner

Clocking in at about three hundred meters in length, barely over a hundred in height and just about as much in width, the Wagner might look more like a literal airship than it should have any right to, but this makes sense in its own way. It has the only known Gygravagnite Reactor and is full of Anti-Gravity Pods, rendering it as the fastest ship ever designed.

In combat, the Wagner can make use of cannons and missile launchers much like any other battleship, but it is not in its firepower where lies its real strength. It may spread 'balloons' of contained Type-G particles, which spread clouds of the gaseous substance to shield itself and others from harm temporarily, and particularly dense clouds will quite simply stop all electromagnetic signatures from coming in or getting out, thus creating a 'screen' rendering the entirety of the area on the other side a puzzle. These clouds do not last for more than a few minutes before suffering a rapid decay as their explosive energies simply separate too far from each other and fade out. In addition, they expend considerable resources so they are to be used sparingly.

But it is not just due to its defensive features that the Wagner has been outsmarting and outlasting the GAF, it would not have survived all these years without the Morrigan computer system. Said by those who have had the chance to talk with it to be the most advanced AI in the world, it is actually a network of over a hundred quantum computers and may or may not have access to the entirety of the world's uploaded data. Though if it does, it does not show it. Indeed, even if the Morrigan's calculations and strategic counsel have literally saved thousands of lives -though it may still make mistakes, just as in the Liberation of New York- it does not handle compliments well and is rather humble, continually insisting that all it is trying to do is bring a more peaceful age, so that it may simply go back to studying human history without having to interfere.

Friendly as it may be, Morrigan niether speaks more than about classified subjects than prompt nor does it involve itself with other's personal matters as much as it would like to see everyone under its wing happy. Though the Wagner regularly meets with the guerilla's 'investors' and is the one that further spreads the goods for the rest of the American continent, only the Captain and the XO ever take part of negotiations with them, and it is unknown whether they get to interact with them face to face or not, or even if they ever get to meet their mysterious benefactors.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	10	6	0	0

Area Capacity

Bridge 10/10	Antenna 6/10	Hull 10/20	Turrets 4/10	Stern 0/10
Internal G-Field	Battlefield Commander	Anti-Gravity	Disturbance Cloud	
Elusive Target	Guardian Maneuver	ECS		



SDE-001 Paladin

The Paladin is a remnant of an age when Clarke still thought they could produce a preposterous number of Gears, each with modular and easy to replace parts. The Paladin is made up of three component pieces, each one slightly under 5 meters, which combine to form the Gear itself.

After the realization that in space legs are relatively useless to a Gear, a certain Actor developed the curious strategy of launching the lower limbs of the Paladin like an improvised missile. Given that the Foundation goes through Actors way faster than they go through Gears, and much to the dismay of the maintenance crew, this tactic has been approved and deemed 'a good use for pointless equipment' and standardized for ease of use into later models of the Paladin's Core.

Visually, it is the closest that the Clarke Foundation will ever have to a machine they can use for the purposes of propaganda, looking more like an actual robot than the very creatures they are hunting just with a few plates bolted on. The Paladin is remarkably humanoid and is stylized like a somewhat modern mechanical samurai. Its ability to spread iridescent 'wings' from its back will impress even the most cynical man with their grandeur. These wings are actually a concentration of organic energy that will continually degrade anything that is exposed to them with their alien poison.

In a time of crisis the machine almost acts on its own, increasing the machine's reaction times, the output of the reactors beyond usually acknowledged safety levels, and perhaps most strangely, subjecting the controller with strange visions of the future and even of dead people, cryptically aiding them to live another day.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	8	8	0	0

Area Capacity

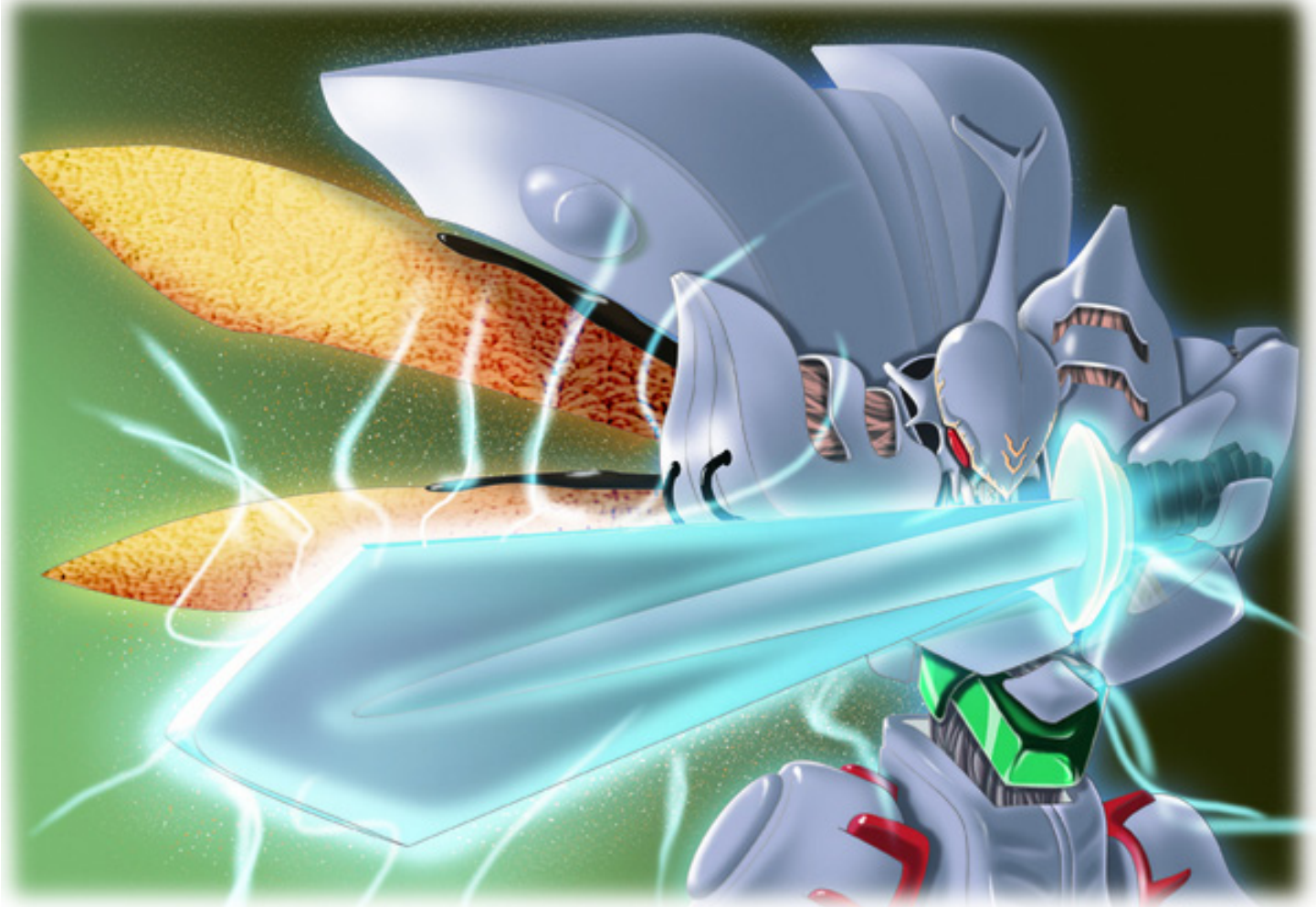
Core 10/15	Head 1/10	Torso 7/15	Arms 7/10	Legs 5/10
Berserker	Vulcans	Beam Cannon	Portable Shield	Heavenly Wind
Bullseye		All-Out Attack	Dueling Blade	CQC
Invincible				Resupply

SDE-002 Warlock

The Warlock is a sleek and fast Gear that vaguely resembles an insect in some of its design aesthetics, and is currently the smallest Gear known at just 8m tall. Actors within often report experiencing an almost-narcotic sensation when the Warlock runs or flies through open spaces as if they themselves could feel the speed they are going at within their very bodies, though this is obviously not the case.

The Warlock has three main strengths going for it that keep the models being rolled out: via voice command the Warlock can expel a cloud of a honey-colored dust after which it begins to glow red. The energy released makes its contours appear to catch flame, by coating itself with this substance its speed dramatically increases. Outside a Colony, the Warlock appears to be a red shooting star tearing through the night.

Defensively, the Warlock can deploy a literal barrier in front of itself made up of its organic energy. This has an effect very similar to a Gravgne Field, and most things that attempt to cross it will simply explode. Lastly, the Gear itself has little to no need for sophisticated weaponry, as it can simply harness the organic energy it expels and coat any melee implements it wields, or even harness it for long distance discharges of burning fury.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

Area Capacity

Core 12/20	Head 5/10	Torso 3/10	Arms 6/10	Legs 4/10
Organic Field	Frenzy	Beam Cannon	Beam Saber	CQC
Limiter Release			Great Weapon	Resupply
Three Times Faster				



SDE-003 Demiurge

The latest and most impressive of Clarke's Gear models, it is 17 meters tall and issued out to Actors with the highest degree of cherrypicking. The Demiurge is ungodly powerful and capable of outlasting virtually any foe thanks to its naturally grown colony of Type-R Element G, and a multitude of nanomachine-based technology.

The monster inside encourages Actors to place themselves and everyone else at risk, and should the Actor find themselves caught in the adrenaline rush they might meet an unsavory end at the hands of an encroaching Cryptid, further jeopardizing and endangering everyone else by letting the beast loose.

Reports from Actors of these giants of steel are that riding them is an empowering experience, making them feel that they are invincible giants themselves, standing over a world that cannot possibly hope to stop them if it were to become their enemy.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

Area Capacity

Core 10/10	Head 7/10	Torso 1/15	Arms 7/15	Legs 5/10
Regenerative	All-Out Attack	Extremophile	Great Weapon	Drill
Supercharged	Foresight		Rocket Punch	Anti-Gravity

The dust had barely settled by the time that Wong stepped out of the VTOL. He took a moment to resist the urge to brush the remaining sticky flecks off of his suit. Smearing them would only make things worse. Under different circumstances, the abandoned airbase before him may have been almost pleasant. Those circumstances were called 'trees'. Without them, the erosion of the soil had turned the whole facility into a dustbowl, and lent it a uniquely solemn air of depression and disuse. In a way, it was almost genius.

Wong instructed his pilot to listen for any suspicious radio chatter during his meeting, and his personal guards to follow him out. Mr. Beats lacked the conventional form of respect to come and meet an expected visitor upon arrival, especially one who was as well-known as a Wong.

Even with all of the changes in recent years, basic human needs and urges never change. There was a demand for opium before the invention of electricity, and there would continue to be one long after Gears have been replaced by the next advance in weapons technology. As ever, the more enjoyable substances were rigorously controlled by those in authority. Fascists. But the demand was this there. And Wong met that demand, for a price.

Meeting that demand was not always easy. Trafficking his product between zones and across oceans required hardware that attracted attention. Occasionally, those with more testosterone than wits thought that they could muscle Wong out of his market. For these things and more, Wong found it necessary to use force. And when using force, it paid to use it in an overwhelming amount.

That is where Benjamin Beats entered the life story of Jianguo Wong. Walking deeper into the base, Wong and his guards caught sight of a middle aged man walking toward them, out of one of the nearby buildings.

Balding and sweating in the heat, the mechanic's jumpsuit he wore was halfway unzipped, the sleeves of them tied around his waist rather than letting them dangle.

The worn grey shirt may have been white once. Wong noted his displeasure at the lack of decorum, but decorum was not Beats's specialty. Wong could make such allowances for an old partner.

"Afternoon Wong." Jovial as always, Beats. "I thought we worked out the details on the phone?"

Kong made a show of looking around. "Of the job, yes. But I wish to see your... materials firsthand."

Beats smiled a toothy grin. "What, you don't trust me? Me, your only friend in this cruel and terrible world?"

No reaction. Wong was too professional for that during anything official. "I do not trust fortune, Benjamin."

Benjamin Beats let out a laugh that made him sound twice as big as he was, and waved for Wong and his men to follow. Beats understood the score as well as anyone else.

Benjamin Beats and the small but loyal team of men who worked for him held a position unique to them on Earth. Building and maintaining a Gear took considerable money, and even more infrastructure. Without those, fielding a Gear was virtually impossible. But in the age of Gears, who wanted anything else?

Benjamin Beats had Gears, after a fashion. They were dirty, ugly things built from the shattered corpses of Gears that had been destroyed and left to rust on the battlefield. Filled with electronics from planes 15 years out of date, and armed with weapons salvaged from virtually anything. No upstanding organization would allow them to pass even a routine maintenance inspection. Then again, no upstanding organization would take the sort of jobs that Beats's boys would.

Wong appreciated the service they provided, and the favors that Beats had done for him in the beginning. Favors he had long since repaid.

But the peculiar nature of Beats's operation meant that how many Gears he had, and what those Gears were equipped to handle, varied wildly after any and every job they performed.

Limbs lost, parts salvaged, ammunition used up and weapons destroyed all added up to a constant flux. It was an uncertainty in performance ability that Wong had never brought himself to fully trust.

Beats came to a stop in front of what was originally designed to be an airplane hanger. With the thick dust and some tastefully cosmetic lack of repairs, you would never know it was currently in use for a much more advanced form of weapon. Benjamin whistled.

The door to the hanger slid open, revealing the shockingly clean workshop inside. In the sterile white light beneath them, two vaguely humanoid junkheaps stood tall.

"Only two?" Kong asked.

"It's not been the best year for us." Biggs admitted with a shrug. "But I am expecting some extra capital pretty soon. We can put together another one then. Anyway, two is plenty for this job."

Wong had his doubts, but Beats didn't make promises he could not keep. "And their condition?" "Better than they look." Biggs said. "The one on the left is a Bravery... mostly. More like about 7 Braveries, held together with parts we got out of a Dominion." Wong quickly checked what he knew about military hardware. "I thought the Dominion was a tank, not a gear?"

"Like I said, not the best year. That other one, though, is a thing of beauty. Somebody took on more than they could handle and ended up on the wrong side of town with a Revolution. One of those fancy ones the Guerillas use. God knows how they got it, but turns out it was a steal. Sucker is built to swap out anything for anything else, let me tell you. In fact..." Beats cupped his hands around his mouth and yelled out to someone in the hanger. "Penny! Bring out Big Red."

It took surprisingly little time for the former-Revolution to lumber out into the daylight. It was, in fact, very red.



"See that on the back?" Biggs asked Kong, pointing. "Missile Launcher we ripped off a UEF Gunboat. Built to be anti-air, but simple enough to repurpose." Wong nodded. "Very impress-"

He was cut off mid-sentence by a sound like the air being set ablaze as a pillar of flame launched from the back of Big Red into the air, before diving toward the ground. The dust at Wong's feet leapt into the air half-heartedly from the force of the explosion.

"And that," Beats continued "was your ride out of here."

Big Red turned toward Wong and raised an arm. Wong fought to maintain his composure as he looked down the barrel of a gun that he could probably crawl into if he tried. This didn't make any sense. It had to be a joke. It had to be a mistake.

His guards had already drawn their guns, but even they knew it was a wasted effort. There was nothing they could do to stop even this poor excuse for a Gear, and shooting Benjamin would only guarantee their own deaths.

Wong swallowed, and turned to his only friend in this cruel and terrible world. His eyes asked the question before his words had a chance. At least Benjamin looked torn up about it.

"I don't have anything against you, Kong. I think you are a heck of a guy. You and me, we did alright by each other. The problem is, we did that a little too often. Word got out that I am your man. And, well... you have a lot of enemies, Wong."

Wong went to speak, and realized his mouth was dry. He wanted to blame the dust, but in truth he had not been this terrified since he was a child. The world was falling away beneath his feet. He swallowed again. "I can pay you double what they-"

"It isn't about the money. They know my address. We have history, but they made it a pretty clear choice between you or me. And that is no choice at all."

A dull roar filled the air. VTOLs. More than one, coming in from the south.

"If it makes you feel any better, I plan on naming the new Gear after you..."





# CHAPTER 5



PLAYING THE GAME



## Intermissions

Intermissions consist of a series of Scenes where PCs engage in a myriad of activities seeking to develop their Themes. Despite GGG's most obvious primary feature being the badass giant robots, it is the Intermissions where you will spend the majority of your time as a PC. Gears are nothing without their Actors and you need more variety of play than just gunning down enemies and calling each other names to get the most out of a RPG.

GGG's Scenes are much like those from a play. After the stage has been set by the GM everyone assumes their roles as Actors and set out to play them, with the GM controlling everything but the actions of the PCs. Scenes take place at a location and usually involve one or more NPCs, generally those will be preestablished Places and People respectively.

Players will have to speak in character. Which is to say, they need to be mouthpieces for their PCs and maybe do some acting or funny accents if they feel like it. Instead of saying what your character does, you should say that you do it whenever possible. And so on.

It is important to note scenes do not necessarily occur in real time. A single scene may take up to an hour of playtime but only consist of ten thrilling, and excruciating minutes for your PCs, or you could summarize hours of hard work for the troupe with just five minutes of real time and a few dice rolls.

Scenes often have a specific purpose in mind, which basically means that everyone has gathered at that specific location to get something done. Maybe the group has gone to the the hangar to perform maintenance on their Mecha or they're trying to get a captured Enemy to talk. Even if they weren't trying to do anything in particular, chances are the Scene will require resolution in one form or another, and to conclude the climax of a scene in your favor you have to roll dice and perform Tests.

## Scene Sequence

Episodes should generally begin in the same fashion: the GM sets the very first Scene by gathering the group with a specific scenario in mind. Much like in anime, Episodes generally have a premise that makes them different from the rest, which is usually made clear from the very first Scene. Sometimes it is a simple thing like training with each other, other times there is a more pressing issue such as a supply shortage, and the group has to go undercover in Enemy territory to get what they need, or perhaps everyone is on duty and they must figure out a way to pass the time.

Scenes are initiated when the GM sets a starting point for them and describes them enough for the involved player(s) to know how to proceed, after which all get into character and play begins. Scenes continue until the GM declares the Scene to be finished, usually after everyone has, likewise, said they have finished what they wanted to do with it.

After the first Scene is finished, every one of the players gets the right to call for a Scene they would like to have. This can be in any order - going clockwise from the GM's perspective is usually a good idea if there isn't a consensus on who should go first.

The Scene might be called for because the character wants to perform a task without any particular goal in mind, or the Player might have an objective they're moving toward with their PC and the Scene is an excuse to get there. This might be related to the initial Scene, but often won't be, and other Players might also participate in it if the GM agrees for it to be reasonable.

If a scene is approved, the GM sets it as normal and when it finishes the call for scenes continues round the table until all players are done requesting scenes, or until the GM sees fit to interrupt the PC's peaceful lives and orders them to scramble for their Gears to have an Operation.



## Tests

Tests are how you resolve conflict during Intermissions and Operations, however, there are many different kinds of Tests. Details aside, most Tests involve the rolling of a single d10 and adding a Modifier to it before comparing it to a DN. A result equal to or higher than the DN in the die roll means you've succeeded - though that does not necessarily mean you got to have your cake and eat it too, you might have only just barely managed to avoid catastrophic failure, depending on how well you rolled.

### Skill Tests

Used almost exclusively during Intermissions, after a player has described what their PC is trying to do with the appropriate Skill, a Difficulty Number will be assigned to the task by the GM. You simply select an Attribute that will help the PC at the activity in question, then **roll 1d10 plus the Modifiers from both Attribute and Skill** as appropriate, and **compare it with the Difficulty Number of the task**.

If your Test result is equal to the DN or higher, then you have achieved what you sought to do. If you have succeeded by at least 5 higher than the DN you might achieve a very notable success at the discretion of the GM, possibly achieving even greater heights with bigger numbers. Should you fail to meet the DN, however, then depending on what you were trying to do you may suffer the amount you missed the DN by as Damage for Tests involving particularly dangerous elements that you clearly can't quite afford to mess up badly in a repeated fashion.

### Contested Tests

If you are in a direct competition against another PC or NPC pitting your skills directly against each other and only one of you can be a winner – such as trying to chase them down or both trying to win over the same audience – then you both make the Test at the same time, and **he who rolls the highest result is the winner**. If you were tied, you might continue Testing to find out who is the clear winner.

Note that though generally you both will be using the same Attributes and Skills, that is not necessarily always the case. Characters involved in a Contested Test can choose to forfeit and admit their opponent as the victor at any time during their Turn.

### Attribute Tests

Not everything the PCs attempt will have a Skill associated to it. This is usually the case for tasks that rely solely on a PC's innate abilities and lack any kind of formal training. Examples of such could be a Test to resist the effects of a poisoned drink, to memorize or remember a lot of information very quickly, and to gauge the emotional disposition of others at a glance.

## The Meaning of Difficulty Numbers

Low DN challenges are easy to complete and high DN challenges are more difficult in a linear fashion. Though there is a lot of granularity to play with using a scale between 1 and 20, you are more likely going to use increments of 5 instead, as in the following table.

DN 5 Easier in fiction than real life:

Seducing someone at a bar (Deceit or Diplomacy), shooting blanks with a gun (Combat), crafting a molotov cocktail (Craftsmanship).

DN 10 Leave it to the experts:

Finding shelter in the wild during winter (Survival), disarming a bomb (Craftsmanship), motivating the masses to follow your lead (Diplomacy).

DN 15 Oh my God you can DO that?:

Quadruple backflipping (Dexterity), distracting the big bad with a monologue of your own (Presence), bringing someone back from the brink of death (Academics).

DN 20 What am I reading:

Selling sand in the desert (Deceit), finding the true value of Pi (Academics), hiding under a cardboard box to sneak past security (Stealth).

It is important to note that Tests are a way to advance a story, not to dictate where it should go on a whim, and mechanics for conflict resolution are only presented in a way that permits details to be easily abstracted so that a result is both reasonable for the GM yet doesn't nullify player agency.

This way we do not bind the life of an important PC or NPC to an unlucky, anticlimactic die roll, or risk seeing an entire campaign derailed with every PC getting killed because someone happened to jokingly try out a terrible idea.

At the same time, keep in mind that a game where there is nothing at stake and everyone always gets what they want at all times makes for a boring story, not to mention you might as well do away with the dice rolls entirely if that is the kind of game you are aiming for.



## Extended Tests

Some activities are either unfit to resolve in just a few seconds or to not let you try again after a failure. Extended Tests work just like regular Skill Tests **except you may continue rolling after the first attempt** to reverse a misstep or just to improve your existing success.

The GM may impose a **limit on the maximum number of times you may take your chances**, or simply state that every roll takes a considerable amount of time for your character that they cannot quite afford to waste.

It is unlikely for you to take Damage from failed Extended Tests, but a careless lack of proficiency or particularly bad luck could stall your efforts causing you to waste 'Turns' or even have you take half the amount you missed the DN by as Damage, rounding down. Extended Tests **never benefit from Tension**, even if they are used in a Match.

### Time Management

Some Extended Tests are simple enough you could try your luck at them for however long you wanted to until you got them right, possibly bringing up the question of why would you bother with the Test in the first place. However, others take considerable more time than a Character can afford to waste with perfectionism.

Whether a failed Extended Test could result in Injury for a Character's Plot Armor depends greatly on circumstances. A list of recommended time spent between the rolls of Extended Tests is presented below:

1 Minute or less:

You probably shouldn't bother rolling this unless there's a considerable chance of irreparable failure, from Injury or otherwise. Examples include picking a lock or driving a vehicle.

1 Hour:

Tasks like these will usually take an entire day to get them just right, or you can spend a handful of hours to get the gist of it, such as researching a subject matter at the library or finding food and shelter in a forest.

1 Day:

These are tasks you quite simply just can't do without spending considerable time throughout one or more weeks. This could be anything from asking around town for clues about a case to taking part in a continental rally.

1 Week:

By this point what you are doing is probably better handled off-screen, such as writing a best seller or building your own home from the ground up.

## Mixed Tests

Sometimes what you're trying to do isn't so simple or straightforward that it requires only a single Skill, or even a single Attribute, sometimes what you're trying to do even requires multiple different actions performed in quick succession.

These actions are usually unique and fairly different from each other, ranging from trying to shoot pursuers while riding a motorcycle across a chasm, to sneaking your way behind a guard and then disabling them silently. During those times what you use are Mixed Tests, which combine multiple Tests into one as follows:

First, figure out what is the first part of the Test. In the above examples, it would be controlling the motorcycle across the chasm (if you fall to your death, shooting your pursuer is kind of pointless) or making your way to the guard (without which you can't backstab them). **Make the Test as normal and if you succeed then roll the next Test, adding half the amount you passed the first Test's DN as a bonus to it, rounding up.** Repeat this process until all necessary Tests are cleared then use the final Test to determine how successful it was in total, if necessary. This means that such Tests are more difficult, since there are multiple instances of failure, but they also could potentially be used to make a hard Test easier by chaining it to something you know how to do well.

## Disruption Tests

Instead of trying to overpower your foe from the get go, you interfere with their game and make it harder for their future-attempts to fight back.

This can be anything from tripping up another in a bar brawl to confusing them with overly verbose language in a debate. You **make an Offensive Test as normal** but you only deal half the usual Damage to them (rounding down) and you **place a Disadvantage that lasts one Round with a Success, and then another Round for each 5 you bypass their Defense by.**

## Healing Tests

Your damaged Layers do not need you to tend to them, and in fact even if you do tend to them they won't grow back any faster. The damage dealt to your Plot Armor is more complex than any physical injury, after all. So what happens when you actually undergo treatment?

Instead, you **remove the Disadvantages placed on you from Consequences.** Healing does not necessarily entail the treating of physical injuries; it could also represent undergoing hypnosis to combat fear or getting a pep talk to combat Intellect and Empathy Disadvantages.

**Removing the Disadvantage from a Dent is a DN 10 Test, a Crack is DN 15, and a Breach is DN 20.** Ajar Plot Armor Disadvantages can only be healed naturally.

## Help Tests

When you try to aid a friend who is about to perform a Test of his own, such as lifting someone up to help them climb a fence or serving as an assistant to an ally performing first aid, you Test the corresponding Skill and Attribute of what this help would entail but don't compare it against a DN, instead you simply try to do your best to help someone else out, and it is them who will have to contend with the task's DN with your aid. Check the following table according to the result.

### Help Test Results

#### Failure:

Result equal to 5 or lower. You are not, in fact, helping and only get in your friend's way. Your ally suffers a Disadvantage to their Test.

#### Basic Success:

Result between 6 and 10. Not exactly a stellar appearance, but at least you contributed. You may remove one Disadvantage that your ally is under, but if they're not under any Disadvantages your help is largely a token effort.

#### Critical Success:

Result between 11 and 15. You know what you are doing and it shows, your ally likely appreciates your meaningful aid, and gains an Advantage to their Test.

#### Grand Success:

Result equal to 16 or higher. Depending on what you were doing, you're good enough that you may or may not overshadow the guy who was supposed to actually get work done, possibly being capable of just doing it on your own. Your ally gains not one but two Advantages to their Test.

## Offensive Tests

Sometimes you want to actually hurt another instead of just proving your superiority or scaring them off. **Offensive Tests are exclusively used during Matches after Initiative has been rolled**, and are much like a Skill Test except that **the DN to beat is equal to the opponent's appropriate Defense**.

Should your Offensive Test fail, your turn is over and the Enemy gets a chance at an Offensive Test of their own. Should you be met with success, however, then you **inflict Damage and cause them to lose Plot Armor equal to the amount you passed their Defense DN by**. If you just barely meet the DN, then it does not have a visible effect even though narratively speaking, any onlooker will realize it should have.

Once you have dealt enough Damage to remove a Layer of Plot Armor, you may inflict a Consequence on the Opponent, this is a Disadvantage to all Tests keyed to the specific Attribute that was wounded (Fitness for Grit, Intellect for Drive, Empathy for Wisdom), and if you remove all of the four Layers protecting them the character is entirely at your mercy.

## Escape Tests

Instead of continuing a Match, you may choose to pull back if the confrontation does not quite make you confident you will be victorious, but this too carries a degree of risk.

You have two choices, the first of which is to simply **Withdraw**, fleeing with your tail between your legs, or you may try to negotiate a surrender and **Concede**.

#### Withdrawal:

You choose to get the heck out of dodge, but this is no easy task, the GM will assign you a Test which you will have to at least garner a basic Success in. Generally this involves literally trying to outrun your foe. This Test should have a **DN no lower than 10 and no higher than 15**, and should you succeed you manage to escape the Match unharmed and can be agreed to have also reasonably gotten away from your enemy.

If you **fail this Test**, you still manage to escape from the source of your injury, but not without **taking Damage to any Plot Armor equal to how much you missed the DN by**.

#### Concession:

When you Concede, you offer your terms of surrender in order to allow the other character to win the Match. If the Concession is accepted, you must proceed as accorded and keep your word immediately as proposed.

**The Concession need not be between characters**. It could just be an out-of-character deal made between the Player and the GM to have the gangbanger knock the character out instead of killing him, or that he'll be let go if he warns other people not to mess in their turf.

If the would-be concessor offers **reasonable surrender terms** and his **opponent rejects them** (presumably because he really just wants to finish him off), then the **opponent suffers a Disadvantage for the rest of the Match** and the **Character denied gains an Advantage** for the same duration.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

Many, many things can contribute to or deteriorate one's aptitude, from having a pair of extra hands helping you fix your car faster, to terrible weather making it very hard to navigate during a storm. **Having an Advantage means you can roll two dice instead of one, and keep the better of the two as the result**. Multiple Advantages will all add another die to the roll, making the average results of your Tests that much better. **Having a Disadvantage means you roll two dice but keep the worse roll of the two**, and they stack just like Advantages do making Tests with multiple Disadvantages generally terrible.

Should a Test be affected by both Advantages and Disadvantages at the same time, **each instance of both will cancel out until the balance is broken**.

A single circumstance generally does not add more than one Advantage or Disadvantage to a Test, but multiple sources - such as bad weather *and* having a fever - will.



## Harm and Misfortune

You are not always going to be victorious, and there are only so many mistakes you can make before you finally buy the farm. Thankfully, all PC have Plot Armor that protects them from a horrible unsatisfactory death to a random stray bullet, subdivided into three Defenses.

You have a separate Plot Armor track for Physical, Mental and Emotional threats to your health. Each track has **four Layers of Protection**, absorbing Damage up to your corresponding **Grit, Drive or Wisdom Ranks** from failed Tests, successful enemy Offensive Tests, and other various hazards to your health. **The topmost Layer is always the first one to take Damage, when it is full of Damage that Layer is lost and the Layer immediately below it is the one to receive Damage afterwards, and so on.**

**Losing a Layer of Plot Armor will place a Disadvantage towards all Tests related to the corresponding Attribute on the character.**

Consequences have to be reasonable, of course, penalizing someone's Empathy after you've verbally abused them is sensible enough... trying to make their brains explode from driving them down a logic hole isn't. **Layers naturally repair over time, and the Consequence that causes them to be damaged vanishes at the same time.**

## Consequence Levels

Dent:

A minor annoyance, such as getting winded from a chase, getting scared from a surprise attack, or being embarrassed from getting told off. **Dents and their Damage last until the end of the Match that caused them.**

Crack:

A moderately troublesome Injury, like spraining an ankle after a bad step, losing your composure after falling prey to an enemy ploy, or getting anxious and angry during a discussion. **Cracks and their Damage last until the end of the current Scene.**

Breach:

A major problem that the PC cannot ignore, like a broken arm gained in a fight, vivid hallucinations from inhaling toxic fumes, or a humiliation so terrible it has left you speechless. **Breaches and their Damage will remain until the entire Episode has ended.**

Ajar:

Should the character take enough damage to break the fourth Layer of Plot Armor, he is rendered completely helpless from whichever perspective the Damage happens to strike. They could have been rendered physically crippled, clearly insane with delusions, or catatonically unresponsive to everything and everyone around them. **This Consequence will last for an entire Arc**, though the Player always has the choice to simply make it permanent or have the character die instead of suffering this fate, and make a new PC to replace them.



## Luck vs Skill

The rules for Tests work on the premise that having best equipment in the world or clever positioning can tip the odds in your favor but cannot compensate for a fundamental lack of ability. Tasks are easy enough to succeed at as is - at least reasonable tasks - for anyone with a bare minimum of training or talent, but sometimes Advantages keep piling up and it would be illogical to keep the higher-end results out of a PC's way.

Consider, as an optional rule, allowing characters to trade in two Advantages for an additional 1d10 to add to the result. This way, they still have a chance at a very difficult Test outside the range of their skillset, but they also have a chance of catastrophically failing.

By the same card, if a character's Disadvantages would not meaningfully contribute to adding difficulty to a particular Test – likely an effect of the PC's Modifiers being too high – the GM may trade away two Disadvantages a PC is suffering to raise the target DN by 5.

## Matches

A Match is a sequence of events within a Scene involving two or more characters, usually of a combative nature. What this actually means is that Matches are what results when people are at a cross and one of them wants to press the other, this can be anything from trying to clock the other guy in the face to convincing a witness that they did not see the murderer on the night of the crime.

A Match is subdivided in Rounds that keep track of how long the Match has been going for. **A Round is the fraction of time during which all characters have a chance to take their Turn.** Rounds are divided in Turns, one each per every character involved in the Match which is usually only two. **In a Turn, a Character makes their individual moves.** Turns are sub-divided **into three Phases.** Anything of importance that happens during any Phase should be narrated by the player responsible for said event or by the GM.

The progression of a Match is detailed in the following table.

## Match Structure

### Step 1) Rolling Initiative

Before the Match proper begins determine who goes first by rolling 1d10 + Your Genre Points, this is the Character's Initiative. Once the numbers are all rolled and properly ordered from highest to lowest this Initiative Order should be noted down. Characters may freely trade their Initiatives with any willing friendlies at the beginning of a new Round or delay theirs to take place at the same time as another's.

### Step 2) Setting Tension

Set Tension to 1 before the beginning of the first Round. Tension rises at the end of each Round by 1. Whenever a Character performs a Test, they add the current Tension as a bonus to the Test.

### Step 3) Starting the Round

Once Round 1 begins, the Initiative Order follows from highest to lowest, giving each Character a chance to do an Action of their own during their own Turn.

#### Step 3.1) Beginning Phase

During the Beginning phase, the PC decides how they will act this turn. This means they decide what they will do and how. They may also use abilities that do not require an Action to be performed, such as the use of Called Genre Powers during Operations. Once the Player is done using abilities and has decided on their Action for the Turn, the phase ends and the Action Phase begins. In addition, the beginning of the Turn is when abilities measured in Rounds from the user's point of view end.

#### Step 3.2) Action Phase

Actions taken during your Turn generally require Tests, called Action Tests, and once you've taken yours you are done for the turn. When all Actions have been resolved, proceed to the End Phase.

#### Step 3.3) End Phase

This is the phase at the end of a Turn after the PC's Actions have been made and their effects described. Abilities with a lasting effect that go away 'at end of Turn' end now. When a Turn ends, the character next on the Initiative Order team starts their Turn, and the sequence continues until the Round has ended.

### Step 4) Ending the Round

When the Round finishes, Tension increases by 1 and the Initiative Order resets to the beginning, but is not rerolled.



## Tension

Tension is a mechanic that represents the dramatic rise in stakes during the ebb and flow of combat as **a bonus to all Tests during a Match that isn't to Heal or Escape**, and to every **Offensive Test during Operations**.

**Tension always starts at 1, and increases by 1 at the end of every Round**, so by the second Round everyone is at 2 Tension, and so on. **Tension adds a +1 to relevant Tests per point**, so a Tension of 5 adds a bonus of +5. In addition various Gear Upgrades may benefit in particular ways from Tension and, if that is the case, those Upgrades will state the amount of Tension required for their effects to take place.

Often abilities and Upgrades will refer to 'Your' or someone else's Tension, this is because some abilities to modify an individual's own Tension exist. Individual Tension is a static bonus that does not affect the Tension of the battle itself.

### Intensive Management

Tension will always change every Round on its own, and if a bunch of Characters have ways to change their own Tension, this can get problematic to keep track of as a GM.

Every character sheet has a 'Tension Modifier' box for the individual player to place their individual bonuses, and Tension itself should be marked by something simple such as a die, a d20 to keep track of it from turns 1 to 20 is recommended.

The Match or Operation that goes beyond 20 Rounds is extremely rare, but if you somehow find yourself in one that is long enough, remembering to add 20 to the new Tension die will be significantly easier than keeping track of every instance of 10 Rounds that have already passed. Plus, you don't run the risk of mistakenly grabbing that d10 and using it to roll in the middle of the action, then leaving you wondering just how many turns have actually passed.

During an Intermission usually the Tension bonus will apply to Tests that are not to Escape or Heal. This means that it exists for the purpose of keeping the action moving and continually increasing the stakes.

Exceptions are possible, however, and if a GM judges that an individual die roll should make use of Tension because it contributes to the conflict instead of avoiding it then it should also apply.

By the same token, someone trying to the kind of Tests that would usually benefit from Tension without trying to affect another character can see themselves losing the bonus if the GM so decrees for the sake of keeping to the spirit of the rules instead of the written word.

Disruption Tests sit at an odd crossroad, where they are often better used to stall for time or to create an opening than to actually speed up a Match, yet they benefit from Tension. This is because they are thematically aggressive in nature and are very much like Offensive Tests but with less Damage and more Disadvantages.

## Advanced Combat Circumstances

The following rules do not apply during most Matches, and in fact do not really need to apply if you would rather keep things simple. Still, they are included as optional rules for the sake of those wishing to have a higher degree of versatility.

### Surprise

When a Character gets the jump on another, either because they walked into an ambush, the assailant decided to stab an unsuspecting would-be-ally in the back, or due to ninja-like use of the Stealth skill, the victim is said to be caught by Surprise.

In these circumstances the attacking character gets to make a Action before the defender even gets a chance to roll for Initiative, caught completely flat-footed, and this gives the attacker an Advantage.

### Zones

Everything must take place somewhere. The areas where Matches take place are called Zones; this combat terrain is of an abstracted size that roughly encapsulates the area that Characters might be able to cover without having to abandon a Match or make an effort to take it somewhere else.

Zones might have an effect on the Match, contributing with Advantages (such as fighting in an abandoned warehouse you know every nook and cranny of) or Disadvantages (the place is pitch black dark making it understandably difficult to do anything) or a mix of both (fighting an alligator underwater will give the reptile an Advantage, while you will see yourself at a Disadvantage) or perhaps even none, depending on the occasion.

A Character might opt to move the Match to a different, neighbouring Zone on their Action in place of doing something else, without Retreating.

### Proxies and Equipment

Sometimes it isn't you that is at risk, either physically, mentally or emotionally, but an object in your possession. This is the case of situations such as car chases or competitive videogames - the loser is assumed to throw away their controller in disgust. In these cases you both do battle using Proxies.

Lacking Attributes of its own, a Proxy uses yours, along with all Skills, Defensive Stats and everything else that could reasonably apply to an object under your control.

Perform the Test or Match just as you would any other, but you don't suffer the effects of Injury yourself and, instead, they apply to the Proxy until all four Layers are gone, at which point it is destroyed and remains unusable until repaired.

## Social Combat

Opposing Tests of the Intellect and Empathy varieties might seem a bit puzzling at first. You can, after all, talk someone down until everything they believe in breaks into pieces and they are left a gibbering mess, and impress or seduce someone to the point they believe you for their personal messianic figure of choice.

Doing this seems no more difficult than shooting or stabbing someone, and invites far less trouble with the authorities.

The crux of the issue lies in that it is simpler if you do pull it off, but doing so is not actually any easier. All you need to try and beat someone into submission is a baseball bat, some competence and luck, while trying to effectively turn everyone into your minions or convincing them that they are clearly insane will more than likely suffer at least a Disadvantage.

Furthermore, most people will snap and try to beat you into submission with their baseball bat the moment a single Intellect or Empathy Injury leaves them antsy or restless, or they might simply stop paying attention and Escape, usually with a Concession.



## Death and Trauma

PCs that take Matches lightly will find themselves losing their Plot Armor fast and often, eventually leading to the complete loss of it. And yet, no matter how many mistakes they make, the rules do not actually say that anyone dies from such a thing without the owner of the Character's consent. Isn't this unrealistic?

Yes, it is, but there is a reason most fiction ignores realism - that would be because it is anticlimactic and disappointing. GGG's ruleset instead take a different approach: a PC that makes a terrible, terrible mess will continue to live, but they will suffer a fate that might as well be worse than death for several Episodes.

This is all fine and dandy in theory, but how does it hold up in practice? To be perfectly honest, there is no simple way. A Character with terrible burns that cannot move from their hospital bed, or one that is at a mental institution will require Scenes designed around him or her... and the other players - including the GM - will have to work with the player in question to keep them engaged and prevent them from being bored.

This should not be seen as a punishment handed down from the GM, however, but as a chance for the PC to develop and come back a stronger person - and maybe try not to make the same mistakes in the future. If that isn't enough to dissuade you, then consider how often in fiction characters that were supposed to be dead come back several episodes later and people with incurable diseases find a way to overcome them when dramatically appropriate.

The flip side of this is that it also applies to NPCs, and, unless the GM clearly shows the enemies dying onscreen, they could very well be still alive and plotting their revenge against the PCs.



## Intermission Scene Example

**Ingham:** The results from the simulation are posted. Jeff, you're at the very bottom.

**Ryu:** Ouch, oh well that can't be helped, I did lose after all.

**Ray:** Blade shows up. "That was some of the worst Enacting I've seen."

**Ryu:** Oh here we go again. You know what, Jeff is tired from this crap: "Do you practice every day to be a complete jerk or is it just a natural talent of yours?"

**Ray:** "Your evasive maneuvers are amateurish in the extreme. You are always leaving your left open whenever you move." He's as smug as ever.

**Ryu:** That does it. Jeff finally snaps and lunges at him. Initiative roll, 8, plus four Genre Points, 12

**Maya:** This should be good. Pass me the chips?

**Ingham:** Here you go. You guys show me how well you've learned the rules and handle it on your own?

**Ray:** Sure. I rolled a 3. I guess you got the jump on me.

**Ryu:** I'm untrained in Combat so I only add Fitness... and at a Disadvantage. A 3 and a 8... So that's 3 plus 3 Fitness for a total of 6.

**Ingham:** Remember that Tension starts at 1.

**Ryu:** A total of 7 it is then!

**Ray:** My Fitness is 4 and I am sitting on four Genre. So you're a point shy.

**Ryu:** Aw. Your go then. Jeff rushes in angry and throws a careless punch to Blade's face.

**Ray:** I rolled a 9, plus 2 Fitness, 3 Combat and 1 Tension. 16 Total. What is your Physical Defense?

**Ryu:** Just 5. Oh man, that means I took 11 to the face. My Grit is of 6 per Layer and you just dealt 10... so I lose one Layer and then mark five more Damage... and if you just look at me badly I'm probably going down another Layer. What is my Disadvantage to Fitness going to be?

**Ray:** A black eye. Remember that, as a Dent, it will go away at the end of the Match. If you lose the next Layer then the Damage and its Consequence will last a bit longer, though.

**Ryu:** Alright. Take it from there.

**Ray:** Blade succinctly blocks Jeff's arm and gives Jeff a square, well-placed jab for his trouble. "See what I'm saying? Your left is completely open."

**Ryu:** Okay, this doesn't look like I'll last long enough to turn it around. How about we negotiate?

**Ray:** ...How so?

**Ryu:** Blade doesn't beat up Jeff senseless, and Jeff listens to what Blade has to say... But! Only so that he can beat him at his own game.

**Ray:** Heh, that is good enough for me.

**Ryu:** Well then, Jeff falls on his butt and glares at Blade. He jumps up and tries to hit Blade once more.

**Ray:** Blade is going to hold and restrain him, then push him down to the ground again. "You don't know your own limitations! All you know how to do is charge and go for a direct attack." Having said his piece, he turns to leave. "Idiots that fight carelessly will only slow the rest of us down." And steps out of the room chuckling to himself.

**Ryu:** Frustrated and mad, Jeff is going to lie there and think about this for a while.

**Maya:** Nice! Don't you think they deserve a reward for this, Ingham?

**Ingham:** Indeed. One of Blade's themes is Rivalry, isn't it? That certainly fits. Gain a Genre Point, Ray.

**Ryu:** What about me? I've got "Aim for the Top!"

**Ray:** ...Is that really what you called it?

**Ingham:** Very well, you get a Point too.



## Operations

The group is going to have to take their Gears out to do battle at some point, otherwise it would be kind of a waste to be playing a Mecha game in the first place, no?

Operations are a special kind of Match that involve giant robots and have a few special rules of their own. We use the term Unit to refer to both Actors and Gears as one entity during Operations. All the player's Units are usually Allies. All Units that are Allies with each other are collectively called a Squad.

It is important to note that Attributes, Skills, Defenses and Traits have, by default, no bearing on Operations, nor do the majority of Advantages and Disadvantages carried over from Intermissions.

## The Briefing

Before the Operation starts, the players should either have a short Scene for a quick briefing detailing the Operation in character or at least be informed of any peculiarities of it out of character, such as any Enemies detected, the Terrain where the battle will take place, and any special conditions for victory and defeat.

Said special conditions, known as Objectives and Circumstances, are optional rules for the GM to figure out on their own if they want to use them, and are detailed later in the book.

### Operation Structure

#### Step 1) Choosing Equipment

If an Unit has Frames, Sub-Units, or Remote Weapons then its owner must choose whether to deploy with them or not and how during this step. If an Unit has Variable Form Modes or Weapons they must also choose which one they will deploy with.

#### Step 2) Rolling Initiative

Before the Operation proper begins determine who goes first by rolling 1d10 + Your Genre Points. This is the Character's Initiative. The highest number goes first, with the order of play progressing to the next highest number and so on. Characters may freely trade their Initiatives with any willing friendlies at the beginning of a new Round or delay theirs to take place at the same time as another's.

#### Step 3) Entering Formation

At the start of an Operation each Unit enters formation, to do so its Base Unit either deploys at the edge of the battlefield or at a position of the GM's choosing. Its Allies then choose whether they deploy one or two Zones away from it and where. Other than Base Units, which always receive priority, the Unit to take their turn first is also the first to enter formation, the same is true for the second Unit, and so on until all Units have taken their place.

#### Step 4) Setting Tension

Set Tension to 1 before the beginning of the first Round. Tension rises at the end of each Round by 1. Whenever a Character performs a Test, they add the current Tension as a bonus to the Test.

#### Step 5) Starting the Round

Once Round 1 begins, the Initiative Order follows from highest to lowest, giving each Character a chance to do an Action of their own during their own Initiatives.

#### Step 6.1) Beginning Phase

During the Beginning phase, the PC decides how they will act this turn. This means they decide what they will do and how. They may also use abilities that do not require an Action to be performed, such as the use of Called Genre Powers during Operations. Once the Player is done using abilities and has decided on their Action for the Turn, the phase ends and the Action Phase begins. In addition, the beginning of the Turn is when abilities measured in Rounds from the user's point of view end.

#### Step 6.2) Action Phase

As part of taking their Action for the Turn, the PC may Move a single Zone before the Action proper takes place, but not afterwards. Actions generally require Tests, called Action Tests, after resolving the Test you are to describe and narrate what has taken place during your Turn and proceed to the End Phase.

#### Step 6.3) End Phase

This is the phase at the end of a Turn after the PC's Actions have been made and their effects described. Abilities with a lasting effect that go away 'at end of Turn' end now. When a Turn ends, the character next in the Initiative Order starts their own Turn, and the sequence continues until the Round has ended.

#### Step 7) Ending the Round

When the Round finishes, Tension increases by 1 and the Initiative Order goes back to the beginning. Repeat Steps 5 through 7 as necessary until the Operation has ended.



## Distances and Range

The rules for terrain and movement are very simplistic. If we were going for realism it would be almost impossible for Gears of different sizes to play well together, thusly GGG abstracts distances and treats everything roughly as if it were the same size, referring to every meaningful lot of terrain as a **Zone** and leaving to the individual group whether or not they want to measure specific distances using a play with a battle map.

A Zone is a designated area with no clearly defined range – it can represent a whole city block during a bout with very large Gears, or a single warehouse's room with those that are not much larger than a person. It only needs to be a distance your Gear could reasonably cover to strike at someone in melee in a few seconds.

Some Gears can cover multiple Zones every Turn, and most Weapons are capable of striking targets in Zones beyond the immediate next. If you want to use a map such as a Chess or Hex board, each square or hex is a Zone.

It is important to note that Weapons may not attack through Enemies to get at others behind them (but they can attack through Zones occupied by Allies). You must maneuver your way around them or try to break through into enemy lines by occupying the same Zone they are in. However, this is a risky proposition and for a Round's worth all enemies making Offensive Actions against you from Range 1 or closer gain an Advantage to their Accuracy or Penetration Tests.

### Don't Get All Tied Up

It is inevitable that at some point that two or more characters roll the exact same Initiative and their controllers will not easily agree on which of them should go first. Simply have those in a tie roll another d10 and whoever has the highest result gets to move earlier, repeating the process if they are tied once more - just make sure you do not add the new results to the previous initiative rolls, that would be silly. If it is only two Characters then just flipping a coin to see who gets to move earlier is simple enough.

Additionally, the GM might notice that rolling individually for every NPC is a pain when there are large numbers of them involved. This is especially true considering how likely it is they will all inevitably move after most PCs considering they usually lack Genre Points. If you want to save time, you can just roll for all NPCs at once - and if they do have Genre Points, add that to their individual results.

## Operation Actions

There are many types of Actions and most of them are available to everyone, the ones restricted to users of certain Upgrades will be described in entry for that particular Upgrade – not here.

Barring special circumstances, you can only take one Action per Turn. **As part of any Action you may Move a a single Zone before applying its individual effects** - Gears are far more mobile than people, and can move what would usually take an entire Action for a human as an afterthought even if they are of similar size.

Special mention get **Offensive Actions**, those are any Actions made to hurt an Enemy - they are Aim, Assist, Attack, Engage and Halt. Since making a high speed giant robot shoot another high speed giant robot is kind of a difficult thing, **Offensive Actions only let you Move towards the target or to circle around it, not backwards or otherwise increasing distance.** Offensive Actions may also be used without Moving as well.

If your Action is **not Offensive** in nature and the **Movement is towards an Enemy**, then you may take advantage of the weapon targeting systems you are currently not using and **spend 1 Energy to Move 1 additional Zone towards the same target.** This extra speed cannot be used while pulling back.

### Aim

You take your time to make your next attack more precise, or at least that's your intention. Choose a Weapon and a target, your next Offensive Action **gains an Advantage for your Accuracy and Penetration Tests** with the chosen Weapon against that enemy.

You may continue to take the Aim Action to gain further Advantages, but if the target ever becomes invalid for the chosen Weapon before you make your shot, or you ever take any Action that is not to continue aiming before the shot is made, then the Advantages are lost.

### Assist

You make someone else's job easier by distracting and meddling with the same target's defenses. Choose a target and an Ally, then **attack the target without adding the Accuracy or Penetration bonuses of your chosen weapon.**

Your chosen **Ally may add half the Accuracy and Penetration of your chosen Weapon (rounding up)** to their respective Offensive Tests against that target for a Round. If you would not be able to Attack the target with said Weapon, you may not use Assist with it either.

## Attack

To Attack you make a **Mixed Accuracy and Penetration Test**, first Test the Accuracy of your Weapon against the Evasion of the Enemy (or enemies, when using a Blast Weapon or such) you are attacking. If you succeed then add half the number you've exceeded the Evasion DN by to the Penetration Test as a bonus (rounding up), then Test the Penetration of your Weapon against the Armor of the Enemy or Enemies.

If you succeed at both Tests, you **inflict the surplus from that last Test as Damage dealt**, and the Enemy loses that much Threshold.

## Boost

You disregard other tactical choices and accelerate as much as possible in one direction, ideal for charging and pulling back. **Move an additional Zone after the usual Move you gain from any kind of Action.**

## Cooperate

Giant Robots are complicated, serious business, and while having a bunch of computers take care of balancing the limbs or manage the energy output, sometimes you need someone else sitting there to interpret the displays and tell the OS to do what it is supposed to do when it refuses to. The flip side is that having an extra pair of hands and eyes in there makes it easier to pump extra juice from your Gear.

**Roll 1d10 + your Tension**, on a result of **10 or higher** you may apply any of the following benefits to the Unit you are subpiloting.

- Move the Unit 1 Zone in a direction of your choice.
- Increase the Unit's Tension by 1 until end of Operation.
- Impart a Disadvantage to all Offensive Tests made against the Unit for a Round.
- Repair 1d5 Threshold to the Unit. This may not go past lost Levels of Threshold.

If **the roll is of 20 or higher**, then the main controller of the Unit gains a Temporary Genre Point in addition to the normal effect.

## Delay

**You take your Action during an Enemy's Turn**, choose any other Action you want to take at a specific time and another different Unit's Initiative to be one step ahead of. **When said Unit performs their Action, yours also is considered to take place at the same time.** If the Enemy would invalidate your chosen Action with their own (such as Boosting away rendering you unable to catch up with your own Move after you chose to Attack) your Action fails.

**You don't need to specify how you want to use your Action**, you can say you want to Attack but not say which Weapon you will use, for instance.

## Abstract Me This

Since Actions vary greatly on how much time they should reasonably take, there is no arbitrary time limit of how long a Turn lasts, much less a Round. It can be assumed however, that generally a Turn takes somewhere between 5 to 10 seconds and that a whole Round is somewhere between 30 seconds to one minute.

Likewise, taking an Action is an abstraction - just because you take a single Attack Action with a sidearm it does not mean the gun fires only once, just that you will deal Damage once at most to them by the rules - and the narration of Actions may contain elements not described in the entry of the Action proper if their use embellishes the description and makes for more dynamic combat, as long as the mechanics are untouched.

The listed Actions are not by any means a definitive list of the things anyone is limited to doing, instead we chose to write those that represent a considerable effort from the PC to perform, but minor acts could certainly be performed at no Action cost, such as taking a few steps around, switching a held Weapon for one in its holster, but the most common of them is talking.

Talking does not require the use of an Action, nor is there a limit to when you may talk - it can be at any point during your Turn or during another's. As always, however, we recommend to exercise common sense and not to try to engage in a ten minute long discussion about the finer points of roman politics and paralyzing the action actually taking place.

You're probably going to notice (or have already noticed) that every Gear moves at more or less the same speed. No matter how high their Evasion is or how tall they supposedly are, they travel at exactly the same pace. You will also notice that there is no need to keep track of ammo spent with most weapons, and that repairing a very small unit is about as difficult as repairing a battleship.

Isn't this unrealistic? Yes, but little details like keeping track of how many bullets out of the hundreds (or thousands) you can carry as a giant robot is not actually all that interesting and only slows down the real action, Gears having multiple movement speeds is only going to encourage folks to try and 'kite' instead of playing fair and actually interacting with each other... and playing solitaire isn't fun for anyone else at the table.

GGG gets rid of all these little annoying things and lets you focus on what actually matters, but don't interpret this as having infinite ammo or anything like that - if you spend an hour out of combat shooting at blanks you are going to need a reload even if you "supposedly" have infinite Ammo.

The rules of the game are guidelines for fair play and for what might make a better, more immersive experience, they are not the physics of the game world and you should never treat them as such.



## Disengage

You **escape from a Duel you're in** and return to the main battle, **moving a Zone away** in a direction of your choice. No rolls are required, but this still uses your Action for the turn, making for a stalling tactic at best against a foe bent on engaging you one to one if you don't have friends to watch your back.

## Dock

If your Squad has a Base Unit within Move Distance, you may dock inside it. **This restores lost Threshold by 1d10 for each Round that you spend in.** This will not fix Maimed Areas. You may redeploy as a normal Action afterwards coming out within a Zone of the Base.

## Engage

You can choose a single Enemy and attempt to single them out from the battle at large to have a Duel with them. To do this you must **attack using a Weapon from Range 1 or closer.**

Whether you have succeeded or not, you **drag your Unit and the Enemy both a Zone away in a direction of your choice.** This Movement is based on the Enemy's location, not yours. Both of you are now engaged in a **Duel, and occupy a single Zone, being now at Range 0.**

You may not Engage a Base Unit unless you are a Base Unit yourself.

## Halt

You interrupt an enemy's actions by drowning them in covering fire, entering a grapple to pin them down, or otherwise using a Weapon in a non-standard way. **Attack an Enemy using any non-Technique Weapon, using Halt with said Weapon counts as a Technique and repeated uses of Halt with it will not benefit from Tension.**

On being hit, the **Enemy will not be able to Move with their next Action**, and will be impaired with a **Disadvantage to all their Offensive Tests for a Round.**

Both effects will apply **as long as the Mixed Test was a success**, even if **no Damage was dealt.**

## Maneuver

You make yourself a hard target by taking cover, adopting a defensive stance, or using the terrain around you to your advantage somehow. **Roll 1d10 and add the result to your Evasion and your Armor for one Round.**

## Duel Masters

Units in a Duel are locked at range 0 and may not Move. Anyone who tries to attack either of both engaged Units will have to Test Accuracy and Penetration against both of them at once (as if using a Blast Weapon) and roll 1d10 afterwards, if the roll is evens they hit their Ally, if it is odds they hit the Enemy instead.

If the Accuracy Test fails against one target but not the other, the one whose Evasion was insufficient is automatically chosen as target. Otherwise, if either of the Units under fire would like to use abilities to negate or diminish damage that would be dealt to them, they must expend any resources to do so before knowing the result of the 1d10 roll, and said resources will not be refunded if they were not attacked.

Teamwork Upgrades can't be used during a Duel, for obvious reasons.

## Retreat

You **pull back from the Operation**, either by escaping the sights of all enemies' radars, by making it impractical to follow you by going in a direction firmly under your control, or simply by being too fast for them to catch.

If you are at the edge of the Operation's battlefield this **succeeds automatically.** Otherwise, you must **perform a Maneuver but using 1d5** instead of 1d10. **If you did not receive any Damage** by the beginning of your next Turn, **the Retreat is a success.**

After retreating, you successfully escape and may not participate or be affected by anything that occurs in the battle any longer. Retreat uses the Distance that you are in after taking your Move for its effects.

## Shift

You shuffle with one of your Allies, you may **trade your position with a willing Ally after your Move.** This way, you can take the heat off someone else's back by taking point yourself, and the reverse also applies.

## Use a Skill

Let us say you do not want to do any of these immediately obviously useful things like "Attacking" or "Maneuvering" and instead you want to do something fancier. For the most part, doing something fancy involves the use of Genre Powers, but there are certain actions that Genre Powers do not cover such as convincing another to stop fighting. You may attempt such Skill uses as an Action with the usual rules for Tests; Opposed, Mixed or otherwise. Convincing a single enemy you don't personally know to lay down his weapons would be Diplomacy Test with a ton of Disadvantages (two to four) for instance, and a Success is more likely to make them temporarily retreat than surrender unconditionally, but the possibility is there in case you meet a friendlier face on the battlefield. Skill Tests benefit from your PC's Attributes, Traits, and other characteristics as normal.

## Inflicting Damage

A success on a Penetration Test will inflict Damage much in the same way that Offensive Tests do during Intermissions. And a Gear's Threshold works in the same way that Plot Armor does for the Actor inside – with two exceptions,

Firstly, Gears only have one Plot Armor track (Threshold), and all Damage goes to it automatically.

Secondly, **all Damage that reduces the defender's Threshold down one Level automatically Maims one of the defender's Areas of your choice**, rendering any Upgrades and Weapons in it useless.

Barring that, it is still mostly the same thing. Once all four of a Gear's Layers are gone they are destroyed and any additional Damage dealt is transferred to the Actor inside (if there is one) usually as Physical Damage.

Threshold loss due to damage is healed automatically at the end of an Operation and all Maimed Areas are repaired as well. **An Unit whose Threshold is restored may not return it to a Level of Threshold that was already lost unless noted otherwise by the specific healing ability.** It should be noted that if a Gear has all of its non-Core Areas Maimed without losing all four Layers of Threshold it is defeated but not destroyed, and the Core ejects immediately.

## The Core

The Core is what holds the Gear's critical systems, such as the PsAICon and the very Actor riding it. Generally the Core is a cockpit with jets installed, but the smaller Gears have a suit of powered armor instead.

Cores are somewhat well-protected and have access to the most fundamental of the Gear's Upgrades, but it is recommended for the Actor inside to Retreat on the double at the time of Ejection - if they get the chance, that is, because not many do.

The ejected Core has an Evasion and Armor equal to half yours (rounding down) but keeps the same Energy and Threshold (with a single Layer of Plot Armor), should this ejected Core be then Maimed somehow then it too falls inert and the Actor inside is at the mercy of its enemies. If it is destroyed, then Damage is dealt to them as with the Gear's destruction.

An Actor may choose to Eject at any time during the Beginning Phase of their Turn, placing themselves 1 Zone away from their Gear's location. In the case of a non-controlled Unit such as a Board, Outsider or Cryptid the Core is completely destroyed if a single point of Damage past the exact amount to bring the Lethal Layer to 0 is dealt – unless Show Some Mercy was used, in that case the creature remains alive, if horribly battered.

## A Handy Cap

So what, exactly, does it mean that an area is "Maimed"? The gist of it is that the Area has been damaged in such a way that anything bolted onto it can no longer be used – this does not actually represent the limb being chopped off, at least not by default.

The idea is that anything installed on the Legs can be rendered useless, but does not make the Gear topple over and remain an useless piece of scrap for the rest of the Operation. If it did that, every battle would devolve into shooting each other's feet and that would get old fast, in the same fashion the Torso can be crippled without the entire thing blowing up automatically.

A Maim can represent anything from a deep puncture with a beam saber that cuts off the circuits, to searing heat that wrecks the outer hardware while the internal systems remain functional, to actually representing that the limbs are severed, if that is a description you are okay running with – Gears can even sustain themselves floating temporarily after their Legs are destroyed, after all, and that might be enough for the rest of the Operation.

This description is usually up to whomever inflicted the Maim in the first place, but in some cases that is not really clear – sometimes you deal Damage to yourself, and other times the Damage comes from sources that not under the control of any particular Character. In the former case, you choose which Area will be sacrificed to the Maim Gods, while in the latter one it is at the GM's whim.

Gears can take plenty of damage before they explode, but will see themselves slowly crippled into uselessness long before then. While the Tension system helps to prevent battles from stagnating, at some point one or more battles will end up feeling like a slog as people resort to Slam just to try and eke out a victory.

Combatants (both PCs and NPCs) are encouraged to choose one of either getting out while the getting is good, or to use Genre Powers and make a daring last stand to prevent this. The use of secondary objectives beyond the obvious 'destruction of all enemies' is also recommended later in the GM section.



## Terrain

Operations must take place somewhere, and every locale is different: from flat plains without any cover to the floor being lava. Being able to take advantage of the Terrain can change the outcome of a battle before anyone even realizes how important it is, so make sure that you know where it is you are going to be deployed and how it affects your Unit. The location can be changed via roleplaying – you can lead the enemy to somewhere more advantageous to you - but doing so might not always be feasible.

There are four default types of Terrain.

### Plain

The most basic and simple kind of Terrain. Plain ranges from everyday meadows and outer space to Boss Platforms™, and it is best described by its own simplicity and lack of advantages or disadvantages. Plain Terrain has no special rules.

### Difficult

From rocky and uneven hills to deserts that clog your Mecha's joints with sand, to having to do battle waist deep in- or even entirely under - water. Difficult Terrain makes it difficult to close in on enemies to attack them or move quickly.

Units that **take Offensive Actions while on Difficult Terrain suffer a Disadvantage**, and **lose the free single Zone Movement as part of an Action**, they must instead Boost or spend Energy after using a non-Offensive Action.

### Defensive

Defensive Terrain is distinguished by having a lot of cover for Units, making it comparable to the Mecha equivalent of war trenches. Examples of Defensive Terrain are urban settings or even an asteroid field.

Defensive Terrain **doubles the result from all Maneuver Actions taken by Units stationed in it and any Attacks made against targets in Defensive Terrain suffer a Disadvantage as well.**

### Extreme

Extreme Terrain covers a variety of hazardous environs that are deadly not just to people but for unprepared Units as well.

Examples of Extreme Terrain include battling in the middle of a magnetic storms or magma diving, and at the **Beginning of a Turn an Unit spends there they suffer 1d10 Damage.**

## The Sky is the Limit

These aren't the only kinds of Terrain you can use, indeed there are as many with an amount of special qualities as large as your imagination allows.

A particular battle could take place very deep underwater, where everyone suffers Damage from pressure every few Rounds and the strong currents move everyone in a particular direction, in addition to the rules for Difficult Terrain.

Maybe you want to have an aerial battle instead, of which Units need Anti-Gravity activated through all of it. It is up to you how complex you want to get.

Just make sure you are clear with how Terrain Adaptability Upgrades interact with these custom battle-fields by asking the GM when something unusual shows up.

Particular mention deserve 3D environments such as underwater and space that can get really bothersome to manage both for Players and GM, particularly if you use maps instead of the abstract Zone method since 2D maps obviously don't handle elevation or depth well.

To help with this, you should define an arbitrary height as the 'ground' level, and Units positioned above or below relative to that altitude should have a 1d10 next to them to set how many Zones away they are from it. You can even use dice of different colors to help mark those who are higher or lower than the ground level.

Units that are directly above or below another can be trickier, you can squeeze whatever you are using as a token in the same spot easy enough, but, when multiple Units start to do that, things can get messy fast, so for the sake of simplicity try not to let it get that far.

Likewise, you could make it so that Anti-Gravity and the like enable an Unit to move upwards, instead of using the abstracted rules for bypassing defensive formations and the disregarding of ground-level terrain.

If you choose to use 3d movement as part of your Terrain in areas like space or underwater, you should likewise allow it to let you ignore enemy defensive formations in the same way Anti-Gravity does.

The abstract method is presented as the default because it is faster to play with and most Units really have no use for being higher than a single Zone away from the battlefield.

If you don't like the lack of realism presented in this, the activation of Anti-Gravity can allow the Unit to Move upwards, and should an Unit fail to maintain it, they fall back down to ground level, suffering 1d10 Damage per Zone they were above ground level beyond the first.

## End of Operation

By default an Operation ends when one team has had all of its Units or its Base Unit destroyed or Retreat, with a mission success going to the victor's side, however there can be other, more varied objectives that can mark a mission's success besides destruction of all enemies. These are discussed more in-depth in the next chapter.

## Operation Turn Example

**Ingham:** And the General Z crumbles in defeat, Jeff is down for the count. Looks like it is up to Maria now. The Outsider turns to face the last Gear standing.

**Maya:** Maria takes a step back defensively and checks on Jeff's vitals.

**Ingham:** Jeff's passed out but he'll make it. The Core ejected before the machine started to go down in flames.

**Ryu:** Aw man... I'm going to be stuck in the hospital for a while, aren't I?

**Ray:** You should have retreated when I told you to do so.

**Maya:** "Command, how long until Black General is up and running again?"

**Ingham:** They patch you to the technicians "The armor is no good, it can't take another hit..." and the next thing you hear is frantic yelling from the bridge "The Outsider's Gravgagne Field is at 100% once again, Type-G fluctuations stabilizing!"

**Ray:** So it has a barrier and is clearly regenerating Energy. Wow. Blade slams a fist at one of the monitors in his cockpit "Damnit!"

**Ingham:** Your boss tells you as much "Maria, you aren't going to win a battle of attrition... you have to finish it. Now."

**Maya:** "Easier said than done..." Maria grimaces and... Okay, let me think for a bit, the Gran DeSir isn't very strong offensively so this is a bit of a problem.

**Ingham:** Take your time.

**Ryu:** Can't you cancel it out with a Field of your own?

**Maya:** Yea, I guess that would be a way to go about it. Ingham, would that be good for a Mid-Scene Upgrade?

**Ingham:** Give me a good fluff justification.

**Maya:** Remember how I was going to get the Gran a set of Frames next Arc? I figure it could be part of those Frames.

**Ingham:** Good enough for me, make the request in-character.

**Maya:** Yay! "Command... how completed is the Defender Pack?"

**Ingham:** "About... seventy percent. The Gravgagne Field is functional but..." Tendo pauses "...I see. Are you sure about using an item this unstable, Maria?"

**Maya:** "Does not look like I have a choice, Sir."

**Ingham:** "Very well. Launch one of the Skysplicers with the Defender Pack, immediately!"

**Maya:** Maria boosts upwards to catch the Type-G Generator, it attaches to the Gear's back and the Gran is enveloped in the green flames of a Gravgagne Field! Drawing the Twin Harkens, it plummets downwards at the enemy!

**Ingham:** Roll your attack.

**Maya:** Accuracy Test! I got a 6, plus 4 from my Weapon and another 6 from Tension that's a 16.

**Ingham:** You cleared it by 6. Test Penetration.

**Maya:** Rolled a 4. Penetration and Tension are the same as for Accuracy... gives me a 14. That's enough to damage it, right?

**Ryu:** Remember to add 3 from passing the Evasion by 6.

**Maya:** ...A 17 then, thanks. So did I hurt it?

**Ingham:** Dealt 11 Damage to be exact. As the Gear approaches both Fields repulse and make holes into each other, just large enough for the giant weapon to cut into the Outsider's chest, spraying its alien ooze like a certain Tarantino movie, and the beast recoils stumbling backwards.

**Maya:** "Now the playing field is even!"

**Ray:** That was awful.

**Ingham:** I should dock you XP for that.

**Maya:** You know you love it.

**Ryu:** I was useful!





## Scaling Issues

The entire point of having Gears is that trying to match them in power without one of your own is a futile effort. But for the sake of verisimilitude, many will want to have a way to try anyway, and though they operate under similar rules, there are fundamental differences between Actors and Gears that make the issue of a direct translation of statistics for one to attack the other an uphill battle.

This is on purpose, as having rules that make such a transition simple would encourage Players to try and take on them with their Skills instead of their Weapons.

Units trying to shoot hapless bystanders have it easy, they just roll 2d10 plus Accuracy and Penetration, then compare that number to the DN of the poor sap they're going to squish - usually the Physical Defense.

The GM is encouraged to say that trying to fight back is simply futile - the characters should try to run away from the giant robots, not try to punch them to death - but in the rare case that allowing the PCs a way to fight back is not an entirely terrible idea there are two ways for the GM to have PCs oppose Units, the easy way is to give them Gear Stats, the hard way is to make your Players think and elicit a Mixed Test from them.

The easy way is not actually readily available to PCs, while it is true that there are characters who can take on mecha by themselves in the genre, these characters are special cases and presenting rules to allow anyone to do so would ruin the entire point of the character being unique in the first place.

The hard way requires the Players first to explain how they intend to actually hurt the enemy by combining Skills creatively to hurt Godzilla on foot, the subsequent Mixed Test will be the equivalent of the Accuracy and Penetration Tests, if the plan sounds reasonable to the GM then they may make the Test, but the final Damage from said Attack is halved, rounding down.

In essence this is not too different from the regular attack method, it is just harder by one step and a half... and very likely to need Tension bonuses to get anywhere against all but the weakest of Gears.

## Advancement

After every Episode your PC is granted an amount of Experience Points (XP) by the GM, whenever you gain XP you should note down the total and add it to your previous XP total to help you keep track of it.

This is because **whenever you gain XP you also gain that many PP and UP**, Pilot Points may be used to augment your PC with further Skills, Defenses or other such abilities, while Upgrade Points are to be spent on either new Upgrades or Enhancements for existing Upgrades of your Gear.

To put it simply, whenever you gain any number of XP, you may spend it both to update your PC and your Gear in equal measure, and you are to keep note of how much XP you have to make tracking this total of PP and UP easier.

The process of learning new Skills, installing new Upgrades, or whatever it is you are spending your points on is entirely abstracted for simplicity's sake. You may roleplay a justification for their acquisition or simply have it occur off-screen, just make sure that, as always, the GM has an idea of what it is you are trying to do with your advancements - he needs to create opportunities for you to take advantage of your purchases after all.

In addition to that, **after every Episode Arc all PCs gain another Genre Power** of their choice from their pool of selectable Genre Powers. **The end of an Episode Arc is also the only time when a Gear may purchase new Upgrades**, and through the course of it and until the Arc has finished they may only spend their UP on Enhancements.

Remember that **Genre Points reset back to three at the beginning of every new Arc**, so don't be afraid to use them!

## Switching Gears

Maybe your Gear got destroyed and everyone presumes you dead, maybe your PC wants to steal an enemy Gear and forsake his own, or maybe you made a few mistakes during the creation of your Gear that render it less than fun to play.

Whichever the reason, you want to make up a new Gear and switch to Enacting it instead of your current one. If you have been keeping track of PP and UP separately (and you should) then rebuilding from scratch up to your current XP will be easy enough, just make sure you've cleared the issue with your GM so that they may incorporate the change into the story in a dramatic way - remember that you're trying to make a story here.

A cool way to do so would be to make the change with an use of the Mid-Scene Upgrade Genre Power, but instead of purchasing another Upgrade you board a new Gear entirely, and it is at full Threshold, Energy and otherwise brand as new!

Flushing a giant inhuman organism into space against its will is hard work. Motivating it to exit the station under its own steam is hard work, and requires an understanding of the Cryptid mentality that is typically unavailable to Clarke agents. However, in the rare event that some manner of reliable fixation the demon has can be discovered, this should be leveraged as much as possible. Getting the beast into the relatively safe engagement area of space is far less difficult than the alternative; shipboard combat is cramped, with the Cryptid having a stealth advantage, and whilst maps of the station are available to Clarke personnel, Cryptids will be more intuitively familiar with their home ground. There is also the obvious danger of gratuitous civilian casualties, and damage to the densely packed devices necessary for functions, or even structural integrity of the station.

Cryptids have a high capacity to resist being involuntarily flushed into space. They usually have rough, jagged outer surfaces, allowing them to keep good traction against the hull in zero gravity. Furthermore, by the time the Clarke foundation becomes aware of them they generally have the coordination necessary to actively grab at the hull during a breach scenario, though it is certainly true that 'new' Cryptids often do not possess this reflex. Cryptids also prefer to be surrounded by matter. The void of space is an environment that most Cryptids will choose to avoid if given a choice, as it is the absence of the patterns and matter their existence feeds upon.

As such, the only way to eject Cryptids from the station is to do so suddenly and violently. Any part of the stations actually designed to function as an airlock is simply not adequate as an exit point, at least if it is performing under normal parameters. Luring one into an airlock can be acceptable if the airlock has had its safety features disabled somehow, though even then, airlocks provide a number of grab points, so the creature will need to be provided with weaponised encouragement to leave the lock along with the flow of air. A rule of thumb that Clarke personnel should keep in well in mind, is that if an unsuited human is capable of saving themselves from the hull breach, so can the Cryptid. Heroic actions during this stage of a hunt can only be considered martyrdom at best.

And so we come to the next option: Destructive breach of station environments. This is by far the most effective means of expelling Cryptids from the station, however it must be used sparingly, as it is likely to cause severe and, if used without consideration, outright irreparable damage to the station. In the hands of a reckless agent it is no better than conducting the battle onboard the station. A destructive breach is most effective against those objectives who demonstrate extremely high or extremely low mobility... or high intelligence. Charges, or any other manner of weapon, perhaps even external fire from Clarke Gears, can be used to breach an area known to have a high activity rate when the target is confirmed to be within it, expelling it along with any crew in the area. Areas with windows are ideal as they are typically equipped with blast shutters which can prevent full depressurisation of the compartment following success. Civilian casualties will fortunately act as "false" grab points when the Cryptid attempts to prevent its expulsion, tying up its limbs and preventing it from reaching sturdier items. Whilst the Clarke foundation would prefer that you do not inflict any civilian casualties at all, a guarantee of mission success is of equivalent value to tens, and in some circumstances even hundreds or thousands of human lives.

A less damaging but arguably more disruptive version of the destructive breach is the module ejection. Whilst a significant portion of the stations were built on site, the discrete prefabricated modules that provided a base for the rest to be built upon still exist, and can be separated in a controlled fashion from the station. To do so will require cooperation from the relevant station control, and as such agents should only expect an approval rate of around 1.8% for Stations I and II. By separating the module containing the Cryptid, the entire module can be opened to space, either removing the objective, or creating a suitable entry point for Gears by doing so in a controlled fashion. This will still annihilate any crew or plant life on board, and cause damage to lower value systems, however the module shell and its associated core systems will remain intact.

In all the above 3 methods, agents will be required to motivate the Cryptid to reach the intended point of exit. The agents should engage in a running battle with the Cryptids from the first point of contact, however fighting well under maximum strength will usually be necessary. Cryptids, despite their powerful nature can still be discouraged by force of arms, and won't pursue prey they have no expectation of being able to apprehend. Ultimately some risk to at least one agent will be required in the luring process in order to create a realistic scenario, even if Cryptid mental states are significantly removed from the human. For the sake of maintaining the social and mental integrity of the cell, Clarke agents should ideally rotate this duty, barring obvious disabilities.



# CHAPTER 6



## RUNNING THE SHOW



# The Genre Master

The GM is a player too, albeit one with a far greater level of responsibility, but at the end of the day they want to have fun just like everyone else.

That said, being the GM often feels like work rather than play. They have to juggle absolutely everything that goes on in a game while making sure that the other players are all entertained and having their time in the spotlight, providing them with the right balance of challenge and development.

It is not an easy thing to do, but that is also what makes it so rewarding. To be GM is to be both a director, writer and actor in your own movie at the same time. You get to narrate and describe everything about the world that the PCs will be in, from how places look to how their actions affect other people. In short, you set the stage and help the other players create a story. This section is made with the GM in mind as the one reading it, from now on whenever we say "You" we are not talking to any other player but the GM.

But do not be fooled into thinking that this is just like writing one of those 'fanfiction' things and that you are the only one with power, or that everything is predictable either. Unlike in console or computer RPGs, there is no set script for the players to just follow and stumble along while they watch 'cutscenes' play. PCs create events and conflict as they go, and they, and you, cannot be sure how it will go until they have rolled the dice.

## Genre Master Requirements

In case the previous disclaimer wasn't enough, here's a quick list of things you will have to constantly worry about as a final deterrent; to GM you will need:

- 1) A solid knowledge of the rules, as it is your duty to know the game well enough to be able to solve any rules issues that arise in a swift fashion and to be a good enough judge to make your own rulings when necessary.
- 2) Good improvisational skills -or a lot of planning - to provide a plot and several subplots for others to follow, while fulfilling the Dramatic Theme quota for all PCs and the good memory - or enough notes - to not forget things.
- 3) To know what it is your players actually want, so as to keep them engaged, and what it is they don't want, to keep them from getting bored.
- 4) A good sense of pacing and general storytelling, so that the story remains focused and reasonable but doesn't go stale from being too predictable, you will need to figure out when to ignore rules and when to employ timeskips to keep the action going, without running the risk of glossing over too much detail and ruining immersion.
- 5) Organizational and communication skills to schedule when, where, for how long, and with whom you will be playing the game. For many, this is the most difficult aspect.

## Rule 0

So we did mention the Golden Rules before, but it is important enough to repeat now that we're in the GM section: the GM has ultimate say in everything, not the rulebook, II in the name of making things fun for everyone else.

If the official ruling is one that would ruin everyone's experience, he is free to ignore the specific rule and let things develop differently. If two players can't agree on how to resolve a specific situation, he is encouraged to halt it and just say what happens, rules be damned, so that the game can proceed, and if one player is behaving in a way that makes things unfun for others (yes, including you) you should feel free to address this concern in an appropriate manner by talking to them about it.

Above all, the GM's job is to make sure the group has fun and he has all of the power in the world, from having control of every single NPC to outright being able to kick someone from the game in the worst of circumstances, to make sure that this objective is met.

## Roll With the Punches

You're the GM so there's probably a story that you want to tell, and that is fine, but as a player there are few things as awful as watching a plot unfold and not being able to have an effect on it at all. Roleplaying games have a degree of freedom while retaining a level of challenge that no other form of entertainment can compare to, and it is only natural that players will on their own initiative do things that mess up your carefully planned schedules and well-crafted scheming.

But remember Rule 0, roleplayers generally want to make use of this freedom and you also want to make use of their inventiveness to make the game more fun for everyone and sit back with you again because you are just that good at entertaining them. So what is one to do when a player starts to try and do all sorts of things that leave a chaotic mess of the plot in their wake? Improvise.

If whatever you are planning hasn't made its presence clear yet, then use whatever they are doing to further your own ends, their act was planned by you all along. If what you are doing is readily observable and they're derailing it... then you've got a problem, because if they're going against what you are trying to have them do, they're obviously having more fun doing something else. Take the hint and perhaps nudge the Scene in a different, player-preferred, direction.

Try to integrate methods, keep the illusion of choice but be permissive enough that what the PCs do actually matters.



## Props

While they're anything but obligatory, bringing props to the game table can make the task of helping everyone immerse themselves into the experience that much easier. Remember, however, that immersion is a means to an end and not a goal in itself.

Pushing your Players a Little, every once in a while, with unnerving background noise, dim lighting and requests to leave mobile phones turned off is alright, but don't make that the default and think that fun should be sacrificed for the sake of immersion.

If you're good with graphics design (or good at stealing assets from others, at least), then you should try and have illustrations of important characters and locations. Maps for use during Operations are great if your group is into that sort of thing as well.

Music is another element of the Mecha Genre you would do well in not to cast aside. Good music playing in the background can make a world of difference in creating an atmosphere. The only problem is where to find it. Generally, you will want a number of randomized playlists separated by the mood they're trying to instill (action, anxiety, mystery) and a few other tunes for specific memorable events you have in mind. Soundtracks from the shows (or games, or whatever) you are taking inspiration from are a solid start, but ambient sounds will do in a pinch.

If you think there are particular songs that could represent the game as a whole, then don't hesitate to give your game an 'Opening Theme' and play it to signal everyone it is time to get in-character. Likewise, you may also have an 'Ending Theme' to play when a session comes to an end. This last one is particularly useful when used right after establishing a cliffhanger!

## Taking it Easy

Having already established how many roles you've got to juggle in order to be a GM, it is only natural many would see GMing as something that, despite being fun, is exhausting. What you're going to read in the last section of this chapter are a few techniques to achieve maximum effect for minimum effort. Instead of going out of your way to plot against and challenge your players, you will have them cross and be at each other's throats out of their own volition.

Remember: You are still the game's referee and have veto power over everything if they're being a tad too silly or downright incoherent.

## Success and Failure

Often the description of a PC's Test is handled by the GM, as the general narrator of the story this might seem like it is just part of the natural order of things and best left untouched. Don't do that. Instead let your Players be the ones to narrate both their successes... and their failures.

Players will certainly be eager enough to describe their accomplishments but, if you also make them describe their missteps, this will, hopefully, not only make them more humble and make the PCs more human but also let them get the best out of their own blunders and ensure no one is unhappy before everyone moves on with the story.

## Relinquishing NPCs

Keeping a consistent setting throughout your Episodes has its fair share of benefits but one of the biggest opportunities it presents is the ability to let it make your game environment come alive for both you and the players by sharing NPC duties.

This might sound unappealing at first, Players want to play their PCs, and you certainly do want to keep control of your precious NPCs too, but this has its fair share of advantages for all.

Players will get to play in Scenes where their PCs are not present, possibly even allowing a player to let their PC die and rest in peace knowing they still have a NPC to control for the rest of the game, and they will get to do things their PCs could never do simply because they get to play as NPCs that shake and move the Base they live in or even the setting from the sidelines.

But what about the poor GM who has to surrender their best tools to the fickle nature of the players, what does he have to gain out of this? Well, in case you haven't been paying attention, this entire section is about minimizing workload for you so there's definitely that, but you will also gain a lot just by having your players that much more invested in your game.

## Creation Powers

After you've let them narrate the outcome of their acts and control the NPCs that they would normally only interact with, what else could you possibly hand over to them? The answer is the power to directly create or alter their environment by improvising.

Let them improvise on the fly about who and what is around them, and let them devise what they do, how and why. Let's say a PC wants to become a member of a club, what you do is give them total control over such a thing, complete with NPCs that attend it too - they don't even have to make up all of them on the spot, they can just roll with whatever they are thinking at the time.

Whenever they make up an important character or location, note down the information in a single index card and take them out when it is time to put them to use.

Not every one of their ideas will strike the right chords, but you still have veto power, and once they get the hang of it, that won't be the case anymore.

Soon enough they'll be keeping things running on their own, allowing you to concentrate on the crux of your plot, and the Operations instead of having to take care of everything.

## Planning Operations

You can't have a game about Mecha without Operations, and you want your Episodes to have a fight somewhere. Okay maybe it should not be during every Episode but the majority of the times you sit down at the table, there should be at least a short instance of giant robots punching each other in the face... or blasting Outsiders to bits, or some other incident that keeps them an important part of the game - anything from being the face of a political event to helping with reconstruction efforts.

### Terrain

Battles have to take place somewhere, and your choice of Terrain as a GM is perhaps one of the subtler ways in which you can not only tilt it towards the end of the difficulty spectrum where you want it to be, but also to make it more than yet another skirmish.

Besieging an enemy fortification is that much more difficult if they have Defensive terrain *and* are surrounded by Difficult Zones from every direction. At the same time, an Enemy that finds an atmospheric environment to be like Extreme Terrain to itself will eventually go down no matter how much difficulty the PCs are having tackling it.

There's a myriad of options available when you decide to get creative, but you should not underestimate the basics either. There is nothing wrong with sticking to Plain Terrain, for one it is simpler and for another it lets you provide an even playing field consistently if your Players prefer entering a battle without having to adapt to a new battleground, preferring to focus on Gear vs Gear tactics.

### Longer Operations

Sometimes you want to spring surprise Enemy reinforcements on your unsuspecting players or have a boss with multiple stages. When this is the case you should have everyone reroll for Initiative - most likely the players have forgotten their exact rolls and the new enemies need to roll for Initiative anyway - rewarding those that held onto their Genre Points.

This might cause a battle to go on long enough that it needs to be split into multiple Episodes. Since this affects the mechanics of the game, what are you to do as a GM in that case? You give them a new Genre Point as per usual and treat this as a whole new Operation - and they will receive XP for both of them after the multi-parter is over.

This is, of course, assuming that the split was either planned or ended in a dramatic twist. If you just paused the game you simply treat it as part of the previous Episode.

## Objectives and Circumstances

Usually the end of an Operation results from no more enemy Units on the battlefield or from destroying their HQ, likewise a defeat is marked by the same measurements but applied to your own squadron. You will often see the need to designate unique enemy Units as the equivalent of an HQ that earns your players a victory if they're defeated, as the defeat of certain important figures is often reason enough for a surrender, retreat, or outright disabling of all the other enemies.

But you can get more crafty than that: you can tell your players that in order to win they have to Maim a specific Area on an enemy Unit and then Retreat to bring it back to base for analysis, or prevent all enemies from harming an ally that is in the middle of evacuating civilians for a specific amount of Rounds. Maybe your players have Objectives they would like to pursue, such as trying to convince an enemy Unit to lay down their firearms and stop fighting, or help the civilians from the previous example to evacuate.

Some of these Objectives may be completed with the use of the rules for Operations, but many will require a degree of creativity on your part as GM. Regardless of whether there are any hard rules or not, anything that impacts the game meaningfully should require one or more Actions to complete, a Skill Test, or the spending of Genre Points, or maybe a combination of the three for a particularly difficult task.

Circumstances are similar but have a key difference to Objectives: they are imposed upon the group by the GM, whether they like it or not, and as such they should be handled with care. By default there are no special Circumstances in any Operation, much like with Terrain, and just like with Terrain the variety of imaginable Circumstances you can throw at your unsuspecting players is near limitless.

Their degree of complexity can vary greatly. For instance, you might make a very simple Circumstance in having the power at the base cut forcing the group to deploy without knowing anything about the enemy other than that they're coming.

But you can get as complicated as you want. Let's say that the PCs haven't had anything to eat in several days. This attack to their morale could mean they don't gain benefits from Tension until they successfully acquire supplies from the enemy, at which point their renewed spirit lets them benefit from it as normal.



## Difficulty and Rewards

At the end of every Episode Arc you should give your players XP so that they can buy new Abilities for their Actors and Gears.

Much like in the Mecha Genre, PCs in GGG do not become more powerful out of the blue nor do they have a new gimmick to showcase every Episode. Instead their power increases in bursts along with the strength of the enemies they must face.

There are two ways to figure out how much XP to give your PCs. You can do so based on an Individual per-Episode basis or plan out ahead of time how much XP per Episode Arc you want to give out to keep a firm grip on the PC's power levels.

### The Individual Method

At the end of an Episode, look at the final result of the Operation that took place and at how many things of importance happened during the Intermission, and assign XP based on whether the Operation was easy or difficult for the PCs to accomplish and the significance of the Intermission to character development and the plot at large.

#### Intermission - Bland

An Intermission during which the PCs just go along with things without much initiative and no meaningful conflict takes place has a value of a measly 1 XP.

#### Intermission - Spicy

An Intermission during which at least one PC got significant development and the plot or a subplot advanced notably is equivalent to 2 XP.

#### Intermission - Hot!

An Intermission during which the plot at large advanced leaps and bounds and events that transpired have permanently and obviously changed the PCs for better or worse would give the entire group a reward of 3 XP.

#### Operation - Bland

An Operation where every Turn goes as expected and no PC is forced to Retreat to avoid being destroyed is easy and should award 1 XP.

#### Operation - Spicy

An Operation where one or more players are forced to Retreat or in which the players are forced to improvise with their Genre Powers in ways they didn't expect to achieve a victory without pulling back is worth around 2 XP.

#### Operation - Hot!

An Operation where the battle is long and hard fought, only won by the skin of the PC's teeth with a mix of ingenuity, good luck and perseverance earns its participants 3 XP.

## The Planned Method

You don't want your Actors to become superhuman and you intend for your player's Gears to follow classic genre conventions with the rate at which they gain major Upgrades. If this is the case, this is the method for you. Take a look at how many Episode Arcs you plan to have and consider how strong you want them to be at the end, then divide the Recommended XP per Level by the number of Episodes in each Arc.

### Level 1

The Actors are still getting the hang of things and their Gears are being improved slowly as they are adapted to their controller: Around 15 XP.

### Level 2

The Actors have considerable skill and fame in their fields of specialty. Their Gears are considerably improving their performance and drawing out their expected potential: Around 30 XP.

### Level 3

The Actors are now masters of their domain or true jacks of all trades, with their Gears peaking in their expected power in their specialty and a mid-season Upgrade being imminent: Around 45 XP.

### Level 4

The Actors are now movers and shakers, admired by their allies and feared by their enemies. The Gears of the crew have either maximized their capabilities or have been Upgraded enough they may be considered new, next-gen Gears that cannot be matched one on one by most enemies: Topping at 60 XP.

### Level 5

The Actors and their Gears are considered utter badasses and WMDs on their own, capable of shutting down entire armies by themselves if they properly make use of their power to strike at the heart of the enemy faction: Beyond 60 XP.

## Keeping it Simple

The importance of your authority as GM is especially poignant when you realize this chapter is talking only to you, and not to the other players, making basically everything in these pages optional material.

Some of the ideas here may seem like an unnecessary complexity or may not mesh well with your style of running things. That is fine. Just keep in mind that variety is the spice of life and do try them out once you're comfortable with what you've already got.

## The Course of Episodes

At its heart, GGG is engineered to craft Episodic Character-Driven stories - as opposed to Serial Action-Driven stories - this means that, although the plot itself is important, the heart of the game is how the characters interact with it on a daily basis, as opposed to the plot unfolding on its own and how people react to it.

Your job is to set the stage at the beginning of every Episode with a Scene that engages everyone and encourages them to develop their characters afterwards, throwing in an Operation at them when it looks appropriate.

In other words, you need to find something that they all can do together, and to do so with the versimilitude they expect out of the Genre, it should be reminiscent of content in mecha shows or comics and will depend on the kind of game you are running - likely with elements taken from slice of life, war drama and science fiction as well.

If you are in need of inspiration, feel free to use the table in the following pages. The story seeds placed in there will not give you an entire plot structure for you to use, but provide a starting point for you to develop your own ideas.

Should you be feeling whimsical and creative enough for it, you may even roll a multiple number of times in the table and mix the results together to create a Frankenstein's monster of an Episode with enough twists and turns to leave your Players apalled.

Some of the results involve Operations, some of them could be used during Operations but not necessarily, and some others are purely for Intermissions. Being completely random, it is possible that one or more results don't suit the game you are running, but you can see that as a challenge to make it work despite expectations.

## The Benefits of Episodic Games

Above all other things, Roleplaying Games are a social activity that demands considerable commitment from everyone involved in it to continue weaving a story together week after week. But people have lives, and inevitably they will fail to show up from time to time - sometimes without being able to tell you, the GM, in advance.

The Episodic structure lets you throw a self-contained adventure to everyone who is present at the game table that day and handwave the absence of another PC away with a minimum of trouble to the narrative. A Serial type of game that directly picks up where the previous session left off would run into the trouble of necessitating the PC whose owner is absent to be controlled by the GM, and often that leads to events that the sidelined Player is not entirely in agreement with, much to their frustration.

If anyone misses a session, give them a quick recap of the events taking place in it they should be aware of, either before the game begins or have the characters themselves share the information with them.

Likewise if you really, really need everyone to be together for a particularly important plot development and it turns out one or more people can't make it, you can leave that Episode for later and throw a quick session to serve as a prelude or to show off elements of the PC's lives that are usually ignored, instead of having to resort to 'filler' episodes or having to cancel the meeting altogether.

The integrity of the story is important, but you should prioritize the Players enjoying it first. Otherwise, they will simply cease to enjoy your game and it will meet an anticlimactic end.





## Random Episode Ideas

01	Training day, the PCs must beat a rival group!
02	Training day, the team must fight each other.
03	Training day, but outside of Gears!
04	Training day, redo the last Operation, but harder
05	An accident occurs during a training session.
06	The base undergoes an improptu emergency drill.
07	In the middle of a drill, a real emergency strikes.
08	The PCs are on standby, the threat is unknown.
09	The PCs have a day off
10	The PCs are to attend to an important event.
11	A mysterious sponsor examines the PC's squad.
12	A spy makes contact with one or more PCs.
13	One or more of the PCs are stalked by media.
14	One or more of the PCs are stalked by rabid fans.
15	One or more of the PCs see "strange people."
16	They say that ghosts lurk about the base at night.
17	Spies infiltrate and try to destroy the base!
18	Spies infiltrate and try to kill the PCs!
19	There is a shortage of battle supplies.
20	There is a total power outage all of a sudden.
21	Crucial Gear maintenance equipment is missing.
22	Gear weaponry goes missing before deployment.
23	Two or more PCs are having shared dreams.
24	At least one of the PCs has premonitory dreams.
25	Natural disasters strike!

26	Natural disasters strike... During an Operation!
27	Natural disasters separate the PCs.
28	The PCs get on the bad side of dangerous people.
29	An important friend of the PCs is in danger.
30	One or more of the PCs are sick, but still on duty.
31	At least one PC eats bad food and is sick for days.
32	One or more PCs receive blackmail threats.
33	One Gear is picked by the press as a scapegoat.
34	One or more Gears are hijacked!
35	One or more Gears malfunction mid-Operation.
36	One or more Gears are vandalized overnight.
37	One or more Gears test prototype technology.
38	A test of prototype technology goes horribly wrong.
39	Technology compatible with the Gears arrives.
40	One captured Glory activates on its own later.
41	A dead Outsider or Cryptid was still alive after all!
42	Whilst on patrol, an UEF ID calls for help.
43	Whilst on patrol, the PCs.
44	Whilst on patrol, refugees request to be picked up.
45	Whilst on patrol, spies take over the bridge.
46	Whilst on patrol, a dormant Outsider is detected.
47	Whilst on patrol, the PCs witness a Cryptid's birth.
48	Whilst on patrol, the PCs find a wrecked Landship.
49	Whilst on patrol, the PCs get lost.
50	Whilst on patrol, the PCs are ambushed.



## Random Episode Ideas (continued)

51	Whilst on patrol, the PCs find a new kind of enemy.
52	A mysterious ally shows up to help, then leaves.
53	A rival team of allies arrives to the base.
54	Enemies have stolen supplies.
55	Enemies attack allied supply transport.
56	Allied supply craft is actually full of enemy spies.
57	The identity of an important NPC is stolen.
58	The identity of at least one PC is stolen.
59	Someone claiming to be an old friend shows up.
60	An NPC turns up dead in strange circumstances.
61	Someone broke into the residence of the PCs.
62	A PC receives flowers and a love letter.
63	A PC receives angry complaints.
64	A PC receives a creepy poem.
65	A PC receives a for collateral damage.
66	Someone plays constnat pranks on the PCs.
67	There is no food. Anywhere.
68	The weather is absolutely awful.
69	A 3G-Bomb was detonated relatively close.
70	A 3G-Bomb is fired at the base, ETA is 1 hour!
71	A 3G-Bomb blocks out sunlight for days.
72	After a surprise inspection, PCs risk demotion.
73	A single PCs gets all the credit for last Operation.
74	Dissidents rally to protest against the PC's faction.
75	Dissidents rally to protest at te PC's doorsteps.

76	An NPC having a bad day picks a fight with a PC.
77	An NPC having a good day gives a PC a gift.
78	One PC is accused of treason.
79	PCs receive curious looks from the science team.
80	Usually helpful AIs go rogue.
81	The simulators are replaced with a videogame.
82	A kid claiming to be the child of a PC shows up.
83	A PC's loved one has passed away.
84	Everyone is to undergo a psychological evaluation.
85	Everyone is to undergo a psychological evaluation.
86	The PCs are trapped in the same room.
87	A stray animal takes a liking to one of the PCs.
88	A stray animal takes a liking to one of the PCs.
89	A pack of stray animals abhor the PCs.
90	Today is a PC's birthday!
91	Today is the birthday of an important NPC!
92	Today is Valentine's Day.
93	Today is Christmas.
94	Today is Halloween.
95	Today is April Fools.
96	Exposition episode.
97	Sports episode.
98	Beach episode.
99	Hot springs episode.
00	"It was all a dream" episode.





## Length

You're going to have to define a general number of episodes for all the things that you have planned to take place. It does not need to be strict but should serve as a guideline. It may sound restrictive but having a general idea of the intended Season's length should give a good idea to everyone of the kind of pacing they should expect and whether or not the goals they have set in mind are too short or long sighted.

Plus, if it turns out everyone wants to keep going, you can always get a second Season. These are recommended Season lengths suited to usual Mecha anime expectations.

### Number of Episodes to Season Format

6	OVA Miniseries
12	Short Season
24	Single Season
48	Year-Long Double Season

Since GGG works in Episode Arcs, somewhere down the line you'll have to divvy these episodes up into arcs. Somewhere between 3 and 6 episodes works best for the shorter games while 7 and 10 is recommended for the longer ones.

This will be very helpful in distributing any subplots and Themes you want to be explored along the way evenly and start you thinking of how in-depth you wish to explore the Themes. It is recommended to have no less than 2 arcs and no more than 5.

## Arc Structure

The Episode Arcs of GGG are an easily glossed-over but crucial element of its narrative and mechanical structure. As GM, you will have to come up not only with episodic plots for your game, but with an unifying element to form an Arc.

Most Episodes in an Arc are interlinked in an obvious fashion. For instance, an Arc may last for the duration of an NPC's visit to the base, and another chain of Episodes will last as long as it takes for the PCs to finish off a recurring foe introduced at the beginning of the Arc.

Remember to mine your PC's Themes for ideas on how to stage your Episodes, and spread everyone's Themes all over the Arc to ensure everyone has a chance for quality roleplaying. The following is a general outline on designing Arcs for your perusal. You do not need to use this method if you have your own, but if you are stumped for ideas then it is definitely worth a look.

## Intermissions and Operations

Though the default mode of play is that every Episode will start with an Intermission and finish with an Operation, the XP award methods do hint at another possibility and, indeed, you should consider switching it up every once in a while.

You can have multiple Episodes without having an Operation - but make the next Operation extra difficult to compensate for all the Genre Points the PCs have acquired - or you could even have multiple back-to-back 'Boss Rush' style Episodes with nothing but combat - just keep in mind that without a chance to restock any of their resources the PCs won't last forever.



### Step 1: Themes

Take every Theme belonging to the PCs, set them aside and have a good look at them. Do you see any obvious connections between them? Do at least two Themes look like they could make for a good story seed when put together? If so, make note of this 'pair' (or trio, or whatever you've got) and keep looking for more such potential uses for Themes.

For example, if one PC has Unwavering Loyalty as a Reason towards another, whose Bane is that they are Stupidly Brave, then you have one such connection. The brave character will ostensibly place themselves in danger at some point, and the other character will act to protect them. What you are trying to do here is find as many of these little nuggets as you wish to use.

If you can't find any obvious connections between the PCs, then just try to select Themes that haven't seen much love through the course of the Season yet. Remember to make sure you have at least one for every PC, however.

## Step 2: Threats

It is all fine and dandy for your Players to pursue Themes on their own initiative, but you want to encourage them a little – And often that means placing them in a tough spot. Take one of the previously mentioned connections (or standalone Themes) and think how you can bring it to the forefront during an Intermission, in a way that will cause conflict for (and possibly between) the PCs. You have an entire setting worth of tools to do so, with more NPCs than you can shake a stick at, so make use of them.

Continuing with the previous example, the Brave PC could be at odds with a street thug and his gang, who seem all too eager to solve any problems between them with their fists. This single Scene already involves two potential Themes being relevant to the game, giving their owners precious Genre Points.

You want to think of one such instance for every Episode, making as many PC Themes relevant as possible each time. How your Players decide to solve these conflicts is up to them, you only want to get them to develop their Characters.

The example characters do not actually have to engage their prospective enemies in combat. Certainly the Brave one could step away (especially if the Loyal one put in a good effort convincing them to do so), if the Player didn't feel like earning the Genre Point for falling prey to their Bane... Is the character comfortable with having their pride insulted like that, after all? Or will they seek out the gang on their own later? What they do is up to them.

## Step 3: Up the Ante

You are going to want each Arc to have a satisfactory climax, and there is no more obvious way to do it than to make any Themes brought up earlier in the Arc relevant during an Operation. The Brave Character receives an encrypted message from their most sworn of foes, challenging them to a duel in enemy territory – an obvious trap. What will they do and how will the Loyal Character react?

Again, the PC can opt not to raise to the bait, which could potentially derail your plans quite a bit. But that's okay, you want them to develop their characters first and foremost, and will have plenty of chances to advance your schemes later. If the PC realizes they are okay with going back on their beliefs like that, for instance, it sounds like they might be about to get over their Bane and a new Bane is in order.

In the previous example, the GM need not necessarily have to improvise a whole new Operation plan on the spot. They could just have the challenging enemy and their own allies attack the PCs on their own initiative, while the rival of the Brave PC proceeds to call them a coward and do the other unsavory things that rivals do. There you have your End of Arc climactic duel, without sacrificing player agency to get to it.

## A Story About Repetition

This method assumes that the development of Themes will, after an Arc or two, lead to one or more of them changing into different types of Themes or be replaced entirely – and that you have plenty of Themes with solid connections between them to use through various Arcs without risking things becoming stale.

If it turns out that the same two or three connections are always the more interesting ones, you should try to put extra effort in making the other Themes more fun to play with. You can involve important NPCs with the PC's Themes, tie them to important plot elements, and even put them between a rock and a hard place with a serious threat: either make the Theme instantly relevant from then on or the Player has to reevaluate whether they want to keep it if they're not going to make use of it.

## Managing Genre Points

Genre Points are more than a simple number that makes the PCs stronger. Genre Points are a tool to let the Players themselves know they are roleplaying their Themes well, that they are helping keep things interesting, and that they are generally contributing to everyone's good time.

Remember, be generous with the first Point per Episode (besides the default Point they get at the beginning of it) but only give out Points beyond that if they do something meaningful, and develop different Themes.

That said, Genre Powers are still a feature of the game's mechanics and that they make the PCs that much stronger when they do have a solid amount of them. While coming up with Operations, you can be reliably certain your Players will be able to trump whatever it is you throw at them as long as they have Genre Points remaining, because Genre Powers are much stronger than the average Upgrade. Of course, this goes both ways, and when you have the group face off against enemies that have their own Points and Powers the Operations will be considerably harder.

This hits another point of gauging an Operation's difficulty. In most games (Roleplaying or otherwise) the only way to tell if something is challenging is to look at whether it is close to making the Player or Players lose or not, but in GGG a conflict where the group spends a number of Genre Points should be considered a success by the GM, as it made them use up their most precious, finite resource.

And that, in many ways, is what you should be aiming for – to keep them challenged and to make them use up their Genre Points, instead of setting out to try and kill them. Be reasonable with rulings for Genre Powers and remember this is a game, not a competition to see who can master the ruleset best.

Likewise, since Genre Points are reset after every Arc, you should at least leave hints for the Players when that is about to happen so they don't hold back.



## Running a Hiryu Game

Set in a far away, remote island that is totally not a romanticized eastern culture, a Season of GGG focusing on the island of Hiryu and its inhabitants is a tale reminiscent of the classic "Super Robot" Subgenre of Mecha, with young men and women defending their communities from the giant metal beasts and their inscrutable alien masters that brought mankind to its knees.

The main theme of Hiryu is **'United we Stand'**, and games set on the eponymous island are encouraged to play up this factor. The Outsiders and their mechanical monsters, the Botakuri, ravage seaside cities uncaring for their terrorized populace and, after years of quiet despair, the people of the land have taken up arms and decided to fight back, setting aside their differences to face a common enemy.

This is not to say that everyone gets along. Different folk with different backgrounds and interests have always found plenty of reasons to disagree with each other on important matters, and even with everyone working hard towards the same goal, the tension can get so thick sometimes you could cut it with a knife.

This is only made worse by the fact that, currently, the Soaring Dragon Fortress has its hands full simply by defending itself from Outsiders and Botakuri as they come - never strong enough to actually make a serious offensive.

### Difficulty

The Outsiders treat humanity itself like a minor obstacle to all the Gygravagnite-based technology they are actually interested in. They generally avoid being destroyed in battle, retreating when the going gets tough. Considering that until the introduction of the Botakuri they were vastly outnumbered, this makes a certain amount of sense.

Add this all together and you obtain a game that is relatively easy on the players, challenging when it needs to be but unlikely to kill many PCs unless they want to play hero and make a glorious last stand themselves.

This, of course, assumes the Outsiders continue to take it easy and don't make use of the terrifying power they demonstrated when they first came in the Battle of the 23 Hours. The why of this status quo is unknown. Popular theory is that they can't examine that which they have destroyed and thus they hold back out of necessity - but the knowledge that if they wanted to they could rush Hiryu with dozens of Outsiders and hundreds of Botakuri sends a chill down the spines of everyone at the base.

What this means is that you, as the GM, can make the game much harder on the PCs if you so wish but that, by default, it is assumed to be a series of Monster-of-the-Week encounters where defeat is possible but death is unlikely.



### Inspiration

You can draw parallels between a Hiryu game and many, many Mecha shows, as arguably the most common form that the Mecha Genre adopts is that of Superhero-esque robots fending off big bad monsters from the cities they protect. If you want to run such a game and are in the mood for 'researching' some anime for purely scientific purposes, here are some suggestions:

#### **Mazinger Z and shows from Dynamic Productions**

The original Super Robots, protecting Japan and their important laboratories from being destroyed by some very silly looking monsters. If you can get ahold of the various, more modern remakes, that works just as well.

#### **The King of Braves GaoGaiGar**

Obvious self-referential jokes about the letter G aside, GaoGaiGar exhibits how one could take a lighthearted show and slowly raise the stakes towards a truly epic scale with its second half, before finally shifting to a darker tone closer to the morally gray zone.

#### **Super Heavyweight God Gravion**

Though it is easy to dismiss Gravion as a show that is little more than fanservice, it presents a few interesting concepts for the use of Combiners and the flavor interpretation of the Cooperate Action.

#### **Rahxephon**

A symbolism-laden pacific island with its own military struggles to defeat a foe that never goes all out on them, with character interactions as the true heart of the story and a plot whose mysteries can reveal a way to literally change and 'fix' a broken world. Ring any bells?

#### **Fafner in the Azure**

Though more obviously invested on the aspect of Mecha that deals with coming of age, and a tad too grim for the average game, Fafner has bizarre Aliens and a multitude of characters that contribute to battling them, instead of a single useful Pilot and Mecha.

## Defending Hiryu

Mitsurugi Island should be the stage for most anti-Outsider Operations. It is a mostly plain and featureless battle-ground and the PCs have ample time to reach it and get the jump on their approaching enemies. Players may have Units use the Docking Action to step in one of the quick maintenance platforms and receive a quick in-battle fix.

Should the battle on Mitsurugi Island be lost, the Players will get a second chance to stop the coming enemy at Kasshin, in which the number of beacons will cause any and all Outsiders to treat it as if it were Difficult Terrain- or at least this used to be the case. Ever since the introduction of Botakuris, who are unaffected by the Beacons, Outsiders have been having a considerably easier time getting around the island. Outsiders are not impaired by the effects of the Beacons for as long as there are any Botakuri present to clear a path for them, and if there are any by the end of the battle on Mitsurugi, Kasshin is skipped entirely and the next Operation takes place directly on the coasts of Hiryu instead.

The coasts of Hiryu are the last ditch line of defense, and Actors are told it is preferable to be defeated - or destroyed - rather than to allow any enemies to breach into the island and city proper. Coming by the sea, the enemies will start on Difficult Terrain, while the PCs get to enjoy Defensive Terrain and the aid of the Soaring Dragon Fortress itself at the very back of the battlefield, with its many Karakuris and the fearsome Kuzuryusen if they are pushed to the limit.

Do note that use of Blast type Weapons will likely ruin the day of many Civilians, bombarding the city itself with very large waves, unhealthy amounts of radiation, or simply raining fire on it... Without getting into the can of worms that is the Kuzuryusen itself.

The Kuzuryusen is mostly there as a stopgap measure to prevent the game from simply ending in a rather unsatisfactory note. It is very likely to destroy everything on the battlefield but will turn even the happiest of campaigns into a sour story and give even the cockiest of PCs feelings of powerlessness as most of the surrounding civilization destroyed, leaving only the bunkers across it intact - including the fortress itself.

For many that would be a fate worse than simple death could ever be, so don't see it as a cop out and instead take advantage of how it can be used for character development.

## Other Operations

As much as Hiryu's defense force would like to assure you they've got them under control, Outsiders are anything but predictable, and there's absolutely nothing stopping them from going around Hiryu and its defensive lines towards other population centers instead, or trying a pincer attack on the SDF itself.

They could likewise take a period of rest and follow it up with an insurmountable force of Botakuris, and even multiple Outsiders can appear at once - something that has not been seen since day one. Heck, you could even have GAF forces try to get in on the action, forcing the PCs to split their forces.

Then there's the fact that Cryptids were originally spotted in the Far West, so even if they are now in space there's good odds that something still lurks in there, with their unique abilities making for a good change of pace.

Ultimately, this means that you have plenty of room to shake things up for your playing group, and that you do not have to stick to the same formula from start to end.





## Running a Wagner Game

Despite being at the core of the most infamous military force in the planet, the Wagner and its crew are the ones least prepared for the rigors of the battlefield. All other factions have their own facilities and training regimes to shape up their troops, Actors included, and, although the Wagner does have some great simulators, they also sport very unfavorable mortality rates that they simply don't get to make the best of them.

Given only the hardest of missions, it is the saving grace for beginners that their Gears are high spec models and that the Actors chosen by the Morrigan have a great level of innate talent. This is by design much like the so called 'Real Robot' Mecha Subgenre of anime, and Episodes of such a game will reflect that.

The Mobile Battleship Wagner as a center of a campaign hinges around a theme of '**Revolution**' - the odds of the PCs are far from being the best, but they'll be damned if they sit down and accept the status quo, because as far as everyone but the top brass of the UEF is concerned any change that happens will be for the best.

Standing in their way are people both sympathetic and despicable, many of them just as afraid of what would happen if the Guerilla were to win as they are of the Outsiders. For all everyone knows the UEF's deal was the only way to save mankind, but that does not matter to the revolutionaries - they will deal with that problem when the time comes, and hope for the best.

## Difficulty

The Gears and Boards the GAF deploys are significantly weaker than those of the PCs, and definitely nowhere as threatening as Outsiders or Cryptids, but they have numerical superiority on their side and history has proven that to be a factor the guerilla cannot ignore.

For the time being, the GAF would rather not have all of their good men commit suicide blitzing through the guerilla and the Wagner's defenses but a new threat has arisen: the Glories.

Given only to a special test team of cherry-picked aces - known as the Glory Squad - to gather precious battle data in field tests against live enemies, a strategy that would usually be considered to be simply terrible, every Glory is a foe of strength equal to a PC and aims to kill.

Units that do not use the Retreat Action while heavily damaged are inviting trouble to come through the door, and should they defeat a Glory Squadron Unit they will come back stronger - likely developing a rivalry for the PC responsible and gunning for them whenever possible..

Because every enemy they encounter will go for the throat, the PCs under the wing of the Wagner will have a game defaulting to medium difficulty, a harder time than that at the Soaring Dragon Fortress but also easier than those poor souls at the Clarke Foundation. This can be adjusted by changing how aggressive or well-prepared the GAF is at the time.

**GGG**  
GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



## Inspiration

As it was previously stated, the situation of the Wagner is very similar to that of Mecha fiction from the age when it first incorporated science fiction and space opera elements into itself. Here is a quick list of recommendations for the GM that is in need of a wellspring of ideas:

### **Mobile Suit Gundam**

The franchise that created the Subgenre, Gundam constantly places inexperienced pilots with superior machines against experienced foes that eventually catch up to them. Most of the entries even have the characters living in an experimental battleship!

### **Martian Successor Nadesico**

Whimsical at heart but still pretty grim when it wants to be, Nadesico is a good source of ideas if you're feeling like playing with your group's expectations and shaking them up a lot.

### **Overman King Gainer**

Though it may not seem obvious at first, you can use King Gainer to make a custom take on the Wagner's mission by mimicking the Exodus, changing the mythical Yapan for the Hiryu. You can even include Cryptids and Outsiders as the equivalents of the Overdevil and the Brunhilde.

### **Psalm of Planets Eureka Seven**

You have a crew of misfits in an experimental battleship fighting against a sinister world government and their elite force squadron gunning for them. All that with the threat of invincible alien hordes looming over them and a lot of character development make for great inspiration material.

### **Super Beast Machine God Dancouga**

Though the titular Mecha shares a lot with Super Robots conceptually, it also shares a good amount of its presentation with Real Robots, serving as a good example of how you could have the most overpowering Mecha in the world but still have to rely on guerilla warfare.

## Guerilla Tactics

The grand majority of Operations involving the Wagner come in two forms: blitzing to destroy one or more key facilities and the subsequent getting out of dodge, and drawing enemy fire for a specific amount of time as a distraction.

The first is simple enough. Destroy the Base Unit at the back of the GAF defense lines and Retreat before enemy reinforcements swarm you... The second is tougher. The PCs have to be aggressive and destroy enough enemies to get their attention, and only after dealing enough damage and enough Rounds have passed will they be allowed to pull back.

Generally the former kind of mission is offensive in nature and meant to demoralize and weaken the GAF, while the second is a reactionary defense to slow down a GAF offensive on fleeing civilians or attempting to enter the territory of the guerilla itself.

But that is boiling them down to their simplest form, it is bound to happen that things will be more complicated than that, within those two categories you can fit anything from hunting down new Glory prototypes to raiding a supply line and making it back with your spoils of war.

Battles never go as planned, additional enemy forces will ambush the PCs and allies will be in need of saving. If waging war against the UEF wasn't so difficult, there would not be a need to do it.

Of course, those are just the missions that the Wagner is prepared for, it is likely that they will face challenges they never saw coming. Outsiders may decide to help the UEF quell those annoying pests, traitors may hijack a Landship and hold its crew hostage, and rumors of Cryptids spreading from the remains of Zone 4 might even pop up after a time, predictably enough turning real when things just couldn't get any worse.





## Running a Clarke Game

What distinguishes PCs working for the Clarke Foundation from the rest is that while those from the various guerilla forces have a very clear objective and enemy in their sights, the Childhood Department is neither too sure of what the heck it is they're doing nor do they know who they can actually trust.

At its core, this type of game has a theme of **'Secrecy and Paranoia'** with an intricate web of conspiracies and multiple sides scheming and playing politics. This does not mean that the Players have to make politically inclined Actors, heavens no, while that may make the experience much richer for them, it is in no way necessary.

What the Players should prepare themselves for though is to be at the crux of the issue, to be opposed and assisted by the NPCs alike. NPCs' dispositions towards the PCs could remain consistent throughout the Season, or it could change depending on how much the party can be trusted or manipulated. It does not help that the PC's own superiors aren't any different in that regard, but even then, the Players should unveil at least a moderate amount of these secrets and conspiracies as the Arcs march on, but it is important to keep them from the central conflicts of the game until the very end.

In this vein, the game is very much like the Mecha Fiction that bloomed during the middle of the 90's and remained popular for the next decade. The PCs think that what they're doing is the right thing - at least that's what they're told - but they'll be damned if they know what the consequences of their actions actually are.

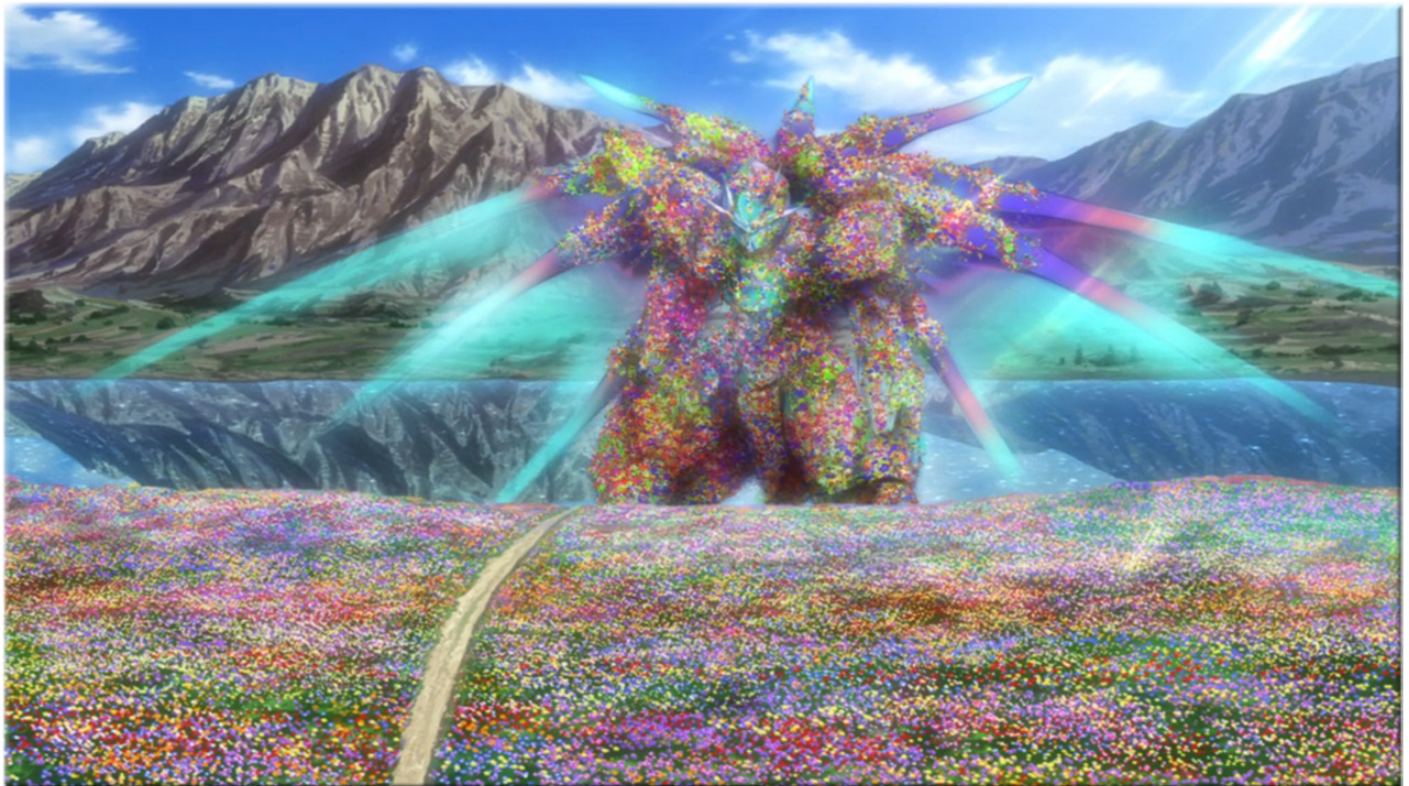
## Difficulty

Every single Operation in which the Childhood Department deploys its Gears is not just potentially lethal - it is likely lethal. Cryptids assimilate not only the physical forms but also memories, knowledge and the very personalities of those that endure prolonged exposure to them.

Not even the Actors inside their Gears are safe, due to the unique offensive methods available to Cryptids. They are capable of damaging a person's psyche and leaving them extremely deranged or even crippling them into helplessness without so much as scratching the Gear itself - to say nothing of those that lack such protection.

On top of that is the matter of Gear combat and how unsavory it is for everyone in the Colonies to see their already cramped spaces occupied by a battle between bizarre aliens and biomechanical monsters. While this has no effect on the battle itself, you should certainly take advantage of the situation when a Blast Weapon is used inside a Colony along with non-Melee Weapons that fail their Accuracy Test to describe the effects of their battles on the environments they're trying to protect, as well as to mess with your PCs later if you want to dig the knife a bit deeper.

To make PCs think about the consequences of their actions more seriously, you could have the Foundation be upset at them: the PCs earn reprimands from their superiors, have the collateral costs of the Operation deducted from their pay, they could even get thrown in a cell for a few days, or a combination of those. The other option, the one that is also harder to pull off but that much more effective on those that aren't complete sociopaths, is to have the community start to show them their unfriendly side once word of mouth starts to get around - making it harder both during Intermissions and Operations for the PCs to get things done.



## Inspiration

As the most complex and nebulous of the three factions presented, Childhood Department games are the kind of game that will demand the most of the GM to run a coherent story. Thankfully there are many modern series you can draw inspiration from to help your emulating of this particular division of the Mecha Genre:

### Neon Genesis Evangelion

You knew it was coming. Evangelion is as adored as it is reviled, but its influence on shaping the next decade of the medium cannot be ignored, particularly if you want your players to be confused folk building castles in the air like Evangelion's audience was.

### The Big O

An action oriented show that has just the right amount of mystery, and a great source of ideas for the handling of investigation scenes. Do not forget though, that The Big O itself frequently left everywhere it touched as a wrecked mess.

### Brain Powerd

The parallels between the Foundation's Gears and Antibodies is obvious, and you could definitely take advantage of that and make use of the show's plot elements as inspiration to craft the backstory.

### Tekkaman Blade

Not so much worthy of note for the Radam beasts as for the Tekkamen themselves, they are humans that have been assimilated by the Radam but retain all their human faculties, just like Cryptids that have completely absorbed people.

### Betterman

Betterman is a show with an oppressive and genuinely creepy atmosphere, with an impressive assortment of biological horrors every episode. On top of that it sports a level of technobabble better than usual for anime, and a conspiracy of multiple distinctive groups all gunning out for the protagonists.

## Investigating Cryptid Sightings

The Childhood Department's Operations can be far more complex than those of other factions. They could be as simple as the PCs deploying with their Gears and putting down a Cryptid ASAP, but they could just as well require Clarke Operatives to spend a part of the Intermission tracking down the Cryptid and sometimes may even devolve into the Actors fending for their lives without their Gears as a Cryptid gets the jump on them for once.

Firstly you should figure out what the Cryptid's behavior will be like. What has it assimilated previously and what will it try to assimilate next? Will it return to the crime scene for a second serving? Is it intelligent enough to attempt hiding from others and, if so, is it any good at it? Is it hellbent on violently eating up the entire Colony, and does it acknowledge the Clarke Foundation as an obstacle on its way?

Second in importance is the Cryptid's placement. Every locale reacts to the Clarke Foundation differently and that will have an impact on whether the search is as simple as being pointed to a dark alley where a strange oversized cat lurks about or if they are more likely to be told to crawl back to the Foundation with nothing.

Lastly are the possible ways in which the PCs can engage the creature in combat. Considering how much they're encouraged to figure out a way to launch a Cryptid off-colony, you may want to consider which methods to do so will be available and which ones won't. If they don't manage to take the battle into space, then the cities of each individual Colony are considered to be Defensive Terrain with plenty of buildings to use as cover, with an Evasion of 0, Armor of 10 and a Threshold of 0, but only vulnerable to Blast type Weapons and only if the PCs are really trying to breach the structure.

## Battling Cryptids

Cryptids have the tendency to assimilate everything around them, whether it is tangible or not, and lack the proper manners to ask their owners whether they are okay with their equipment, bodies, or minds being absorbed before doing so. Inevitably, a Clarke Operative will misstep and leave an opening big enough for the Cryptid will begin assimilating them. At that point, defeating a Cryptid is not so much a matter of "how" as it is a matter of "how fast."

In game terms, a Cryptid may have one or more Weapons with a special ability called Encroachment, always tied to one Attribute. When these Weapons inflict Damage to any Unit, its Actor will receive the same level of Damage to their corresponding Plot Armor.

What this basically means is that an Actor whose Gear gets hit a handful of times may be a goner even if the Gear itself is still standing strong. Given that most of the Foundation's Gears are surprisingly durable and that they have often gone through one or more Actors before getting to the PCs, this may or may not be something that happens relatively often.

For the most part, these Encroachment Weapons will not inflict lasting harm on a PC - they might make them weakened from blood loss, forget their home address number, or leave them temporarily depressed - but these pass with time. The real problem is when that fourth Layer of Plot Armor breaks; a threat only made worse by the fact that it is very possible for a PC to suffer Damage before combat actually begins, and a PC breaking through that point of no return is going to see something drastic happen to them - they might lose internal organs, hallucinate vividly for months, or become sociopathic murderers as a result of the assimilation process removing key aspects of their emotional balance.



## Endgame Ideas

So you want to end things with a bang. The characters have all grown as people and they're strong enough to have taken out the sample enemies, but you are not sure how to go about it. Here are six ideas to get your creative juices flowing, each one making use of one or more rumors and plot hooks present in the corresponding chapter.

### **The Hiryu's Last Stand:**

The SDF has reverse engineered enough Outsider tech to make the Mothership disappear entirely and send it to another dimension, much like they once did to the Space Colonies of Wells years ago. The science team believes this will not kill them, but they should not be able to return back for a good twelve thousand years. After using this weapon, the war is won. The UEF has no longer any reason to fear them, and all seems well... Except for the several hundred remaining Botakuri, directionless and without their masters, heading directly for Hiryu too fast and for any evacuation notices to be effective.

### **Man's Worst Enemy:**

Using another Outsider-turned-Gear as medium and a priestess in a trance state inside the Core, it should be possible to communicate with the Outsiders once again. If the team manages to get the Gear close enough to achieve this via an escort misión, they might be able to make another deal, one more convenient for everyone other than just the upper echelons of the UEF. It becomes grotesquely clear that everything the Outsiders have been doing was condoned by the world government, who gained the secret to immortality in exchange for 'researching mankind and their use of Element G in a natural environment.' The Far West having been handed over like mere goods to trade. A new all-out worldwide offensive against the UEF begins the moment this information is made public.

### **Power and Responsibility:**

The PCs capture one of the six men who rule the world and learn that there is no such thing as a free lunch. It turns out that for all the wonders it is capable of, mass use of Element G brings the heat death of the universe closer with every crystal upwards of a certain threshold - a threshold that the Safe Zones are meant to keep in check and that the Outsiders have been researching. This information is shared among the GAF Generals and the PCs help stage a coup d'etat to take them down. This new world government will have to figure out a way to solve the energy crisis, though the question will be whether they can do so without resorting to oppressing its population or not.

### **Ragnarok:**

The Guerilla and the Colonies perform a joint operation where the former cause a ruckus while the latter take on Boston, aided by the Wagner with an orbital drop. Before the Outsiders can react, a concentration of 3G Bombs manages to sink their Mothership to the depths of the ocean. But things stop going as expected there. The destruction of this event is the greatest the Earth has ever seen, multiple countries become submerged, the unnatural shift in gravity creates a winter that lasts three quarters of a year, and Cryptid births become commonplace in every populated location on the globe. And no one is in a better position to watch and rule over this new world than the New Solar Space Alliance.

### **The Ultimate Weapon:**

Cryptids are actually weapons that the Clarke Foundation and their predecessors have been trying to keep in check for decades, and now after many failed experiments the first controllable Cryptid is engineered, using AIs to keep their instincts in check and allowing them to assimilate only the most selected of components, knowledge and emotion. Waves of Cryptids are sent to the Earth, where they utterly dominate any opposition, even the Outsiders. The PCs are to choose between allowing the SSA's new world domination scheme to succeed and letting these barely controlled monsters continue being produced, or making a stand and destroying the source: the Clarke Foundation.

### **From the New World:**

The origin of the Cryptids is a space between dimensions. They are things that slipped from the cracks between worlds when the Outsiders arrived in our universe, meaning that with enough research on the nature of Cryptids and reverse engineering their biology a way to travel between worlds should be possible. One does not need to win the war with the Outsiders or the UEF if they can simply go to a much more peaceful parallel Earth instead...one which they may proceed to rule themselves with their advanced technology.

## The Supporting Cast

As it was stated in the previous chapter, GGG better suits Character-Driven stories but that does not mean the details of the setting are unimportant or that you should not attempt to make it come to life. You should use the supporting cast to that end - the PC's friends, rivals, acquaintances and lovers - to both instill a sense that the PCs are interacting with a living, breathing world and to reinforce its narrative themes.

The supporting cast takes many forms. You will need NPCs for the players to interact with outside the battlefield and enemies to war with once they step into the cockpit. Some of them will be straightforward enough. Simple folk who don't have giant robots of their own, Non-Combatants will make up most of the NPCs during Intermissions. Others are defined by their performance during Operations and will prioritize combat statistics, rarely getting to use any Attributes or Skills, if they ever do. Of particular importance are those that are just as relevant during Intermissions as they are during Operations, though they are the rarest of them all.

### NPC Tiers

Individual NPCs are just as varied as PCs if not more, and the same could be said of their Gears if they have any, and they advance over time increasing their performance in similar ways, though this depends on their individual Tier. There are Three Tiers for NPCs, all of varying strengths.

GGG includes both example Non-Combatants and Actors of all Three tiers ready for use, which you can reference in a pinch or use as springboards for your own supporting cast characters. It is recommended to have starting PCs face off against Enemies of the Mook Tier for the most part, since Rival and Boss class enemies are very difficult to hurt without any Enhancements... though you could also make use of them early on precisely for that reason.

### Tier 1: Mooks

These are the nameless extras, the hapless bystanders, the rank and file opposing grunts. Their only strength lies in numbers if they have them. As Non-Combatants, they are the forgettable NPCs that get a quirk or two at most but are there mostly to fulfill a purpose like shopkeeper or civilian witness, and, as Enemies, they often represent nameless soldiers or AIs with little to no self-preservation instinct.

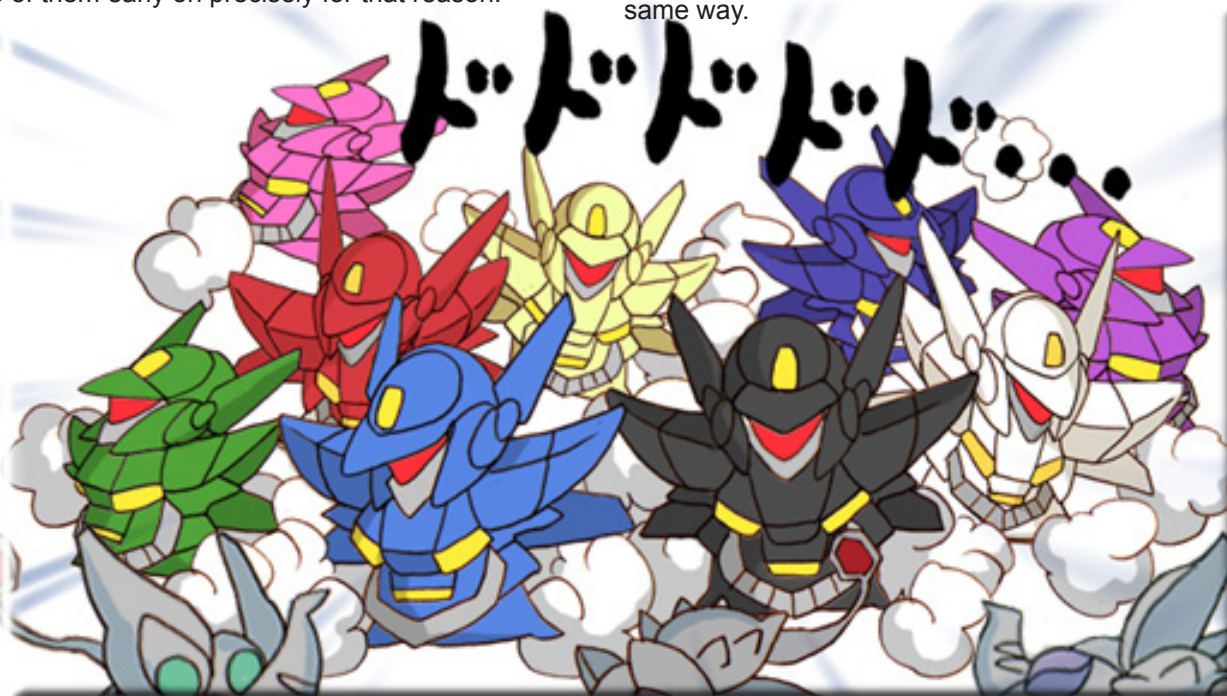
As the lowest of the low, **Mook Characters do not have Natures**. This means all their **Attributes and Plot Armor values start at 0**, and a single point of Damage takes them out unless points are invested. They also **may not possess Traits, and lack Genre Points**, and thus also Genre Powers. Their **Gears do not have Designs**, their maximum **Energy and Threshold values are cut by 5**. Finally, they never gain XP, **but after every Arc all Mooks gain a +1 to all Defenses Initiative** and their Gears receive a **+1 to every Basic Mechanic** - as if they had gained a Genre Point and had purchased every Common Enhancement once. The sample Mooks are all written as to be used during the first Arc.

### Tier 2: Elites

A step above the Mooks, Elites do share the Mook's **lack of Genre and Designs for their Gears**, but they do have Natures, Traits and normal Mechanics from their Chassis. They are just a bit short of matching the PCs, at least early on - they still don't gain XP and thus the gap will widen quickly enough.

Elite Non-Combatants are largely irrelevant and could even possibly be minor named or recurring characters, but lack that special something that makes a PC. As Enemies they may even try and retreat from battle when things start to go south to try and preserve their lives, but they likely won't last more than an Arc or two even then.

**Elites progress in strength in the same way that Mooks do** and their statistical blocks assume them to be used the same way.





### Tier 3: Rivals

Virtually equals to the PCs in all but ownership, a Rival is a major NPC that is more often than not a recurring thorn in the PC's sides. **Rivals are just like PCs in most respects**, complete with a **number of Genre Powers equal to that of the PCs** (starting at three and gaining another after every Arc), and they **deploy in Operations with Genre Points equal to three plus another per every Arc that has passed** – which they will use intelligently to both keep themselves alive and try to shoot down the PCs. **Rivals buy Attributes, Skills, Upgrades and other augmentations as normal**, keeping up with the PCs and their own XP. Sample Rivals are written as starting characters.

### Tier 4: Bosses

The toughest of the tough, Bosses are the movers and shakers of the setting as Non-Combatants and fearsome Enemies that stock Genre Powers and Genre Points just like Rivals do, **plus 1d5 Temporary Genre Points per Episode**. A Boss Tier usually has a higher XP total than the PCs do to justify their superior Intermission and Operation performance, usually between 150 and 300 XP.

Bosses either fight until they die in battle or intelligently retreat the moment things begin to go sour for them. Their lower number does make the pain of battling them a thankful rare occurrence at least. If a Boss class survives for another rematch, give them additional XP as if they were a Rival according to how much the PCs have gained since then. Furthermore, Boss class Enemies **may purchase Enhancements for their Gears with their starting UP** and, likewise, a Boss does have the unique freedom of being **able to take as many Traits as they can buy with their PP**, even after being created.

Sample Bosses are written as their appearance in the game is recommended, with those that have lower XP, Genre Points and Powers recommended as early foes – possibly recurring ones – and those with higher XP as potential endgame encounters.

### The Redshirt Effect

Rare is the Mook or Elite that is not obviously outmatched by a PC in a straight encounter. Even outside the Battlefield they lack the Plot Armor gained from Genre. This is only further emphasized once the PC's start to gain XP to improve themselves with, and the poor low level NPCs are simply left behind.

This is not an oversight. The PCs are the main characters of the story and no-names shouldn't really be a problem for them to handle. Any PC that has devoted considerable PP to being good at something should be able to demonstrate their superiority when compared to regular folk.

It might seem that offering a respectable challenge to this band of plucky do-gooders without resorting to the constant return of their Rivals or a new Boss appearing every other week is going to be a tall order, but nothing is further from the truth. Intelligently applied numbers of low-tier enemies can make up for their inherent weaknesses with Tension bonuses, the stacking of Advantages by supporting each other, and dictating how and when the encounter takes place – among other tactics.

Of course, by the time you start to liberally apply these stratagems, your PCs should be able to handle them. The brawly guy can take down a grunt every one of his Turns and the group's spokesperson can move the masses despite suffering multiple Disadvantages when doing so.

A good rule of thumb is that one starting PC is the equivalent of four Mooks or two Elites. If properly applied, this equivalence can remain effective late into the game – though doubling the number after every 15 XP or so is not a bad idea if you want to take it easy.



## Aberrant Options

Until now NPCs more or less have been using the same rules as PCs, this is out of a desire to both keep things simple and to make sure that PCs are balanced when put next to an NPC or to each other. But sometimes you don't want your enemies to use the same rules that PCs abide by.

Maybe they're monsters that defy human comprehension, going beyond the existing Archetypes, or people twisted to the point they can't be considered as part of the four Natures anymore. Maybe your concerns are more practical and you just need a way to diversify your recurring big bads from the rest. Aberrant abilities exist to fill that niche role. These are considerably stronger than most equivalent options available to PCs and are designed with the express intent of making powerful big bosses.

You may provide any individual enemy with any number of Aberrant abilities without being forced to use more of them – A Gear with the Aberrant Archetype may be controlled by a normal Professional, and you may likewise mix and match.

There is also a consideration of flavor to be had when using Aberrant options, and whatever has them has to not be normal. The sample NPCs and Gears using Aberrant options are primarily Cryptids for this reason, followed by Outsiders and then Glories. Aberrant antagonists are not to be taken lightly, and that is all the more reason to make them stand out with your descriptions.

## The Aberrant Nature

You are not human. Maybe you never were one, or maybe you are what some would call a monster in the guise of a man (or woman), but you are definitely not something normal people can relate to.

When Enacting, you overwhelm your enemies by defying their expectations and constantly returning from any and all injuries, and you do not waste your superior power – you just use it to raze it everything that stands in your way.

### Aberrant Attributes and Plot Armor:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	3	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
7	7	7

### Aberrant Free Traits:

#### Escalating Threat:

You recover one previously spent Genre Point at the beginning of every one of your Turns. This does not work with Temporary Genre Points, and you may not spend normal Genre Points until all Temporary Points are spent.

#### Anticlimactic:

Enemies cannot use Genre Powers that they or their Allies have already used in the same Operation.

## Aberrant Genre Powers

### Brutality

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: You may treat Technique and Recharging Weapons as if they didn't have those qualities for the next Three Rounds.

Description: Thomas was forced to admit, as the enormous tentacle immobilized him one more time, that there was a certain something about the alien thing. A sheer single-mindedness so simple and chaotic in its ways that even his well-honed senses were defenseless against it.

### Pure Pressure

Speed: Called

Cost: 1

Effect: Deal your Tension in Damage to one Enemy Unit.

Description: The Gravagne did not play fair. That was something everyone already was too familiar with for their liking. But the fact that it could simply wave its hands and everyone's equipment would start to malfunction and explode was not a trick they had expected – the damned creature was simply too familiar with the inner workings of Element G.

### Where'd he Go?

Speed: Instant

Cost: 1

Effect: After a Technique weapon has failed to Damage you, you may not be attacked by anyone again until your next Turn.

Description: Matthew fired the Incinerator the first chance he got, and wrapped the Cryptid in a gigantic explosion. When the smoke cleared, there was nothing in the crater, and he was about to mistakenly believe that it had worked when tentacles sprouted up from the ground and lashed at him.

### Impetuous Style

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: If you deal Damage to an Enemy this Turn, they may not use Genre Powers for the next three Rounds.

Description: Everyone held on tight to their posts, even with the forcefields at full power the oncoming strike was going to shake the ship around a lot. But as if to prove that things can always be worse, the energy values of the Cryptid's beam weapon spiked and the forcefields' generators promptly gave away, unable to keep up.



### Impregnable Defense

Speed: Instant

Cost: 2

Effect: Reduce the surplus bonus from the next Accuracy Test to bypass your Evasion to 0.

Description: Apparently the Providence didn't know it just got hit by several kilotons worth of missiles. The giant legged base simply kept walking towards the Williams.

### Undying

Speed: Called

Cost: 2

Effect: Restore 1d10 to your Threshold and another 1d10 at the beginning of your next Turn. This may restore you past lost Threshold Levels and it undoes their respective Maim status when it does so, healing the Area back to normal.

Description: The Maxwell collapsed in flames, crushing a ten story building as it did so. Its regenerative assimilation powers finally defeated, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief when the flames died down and it was still immobile. That was all the time it needed to reactivate itself by absorbing the toppled building, and it rose with a petrifying bellow that froze the hearts of the crew.

### You're Too Slow

Speed: Instant

Cost: 3

Effect: You shift one Zone away from where you currently stand. This is separate of your Move for the Turn. If this would invalidate you as a target of one or more abilities, said abilities fail.

Description: The maniacal laughter of the Glory's pilot just kept going, and Yuji was sick of it. "Shut up! Shut up already!" He raised his arm to fire the beam rifle, but Jonah simply vanished from his sights. Inconveniently enough, he also chose that precise moment to stop laughing.

### Rampage

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: For the next three Rounds you gain an Advantage to all your Accuracy and Penetration Tests.

Description: They warned Bartholomew not to use Beams, but he never listened. The Cryptid screeched in pain and promptly switched gears from lazily walking the streets to tearing buildings left and right. Bart found his Gear buried under a pile of rubble in a matter of seconds.

### Twin Strike

Speed: Called

Cost: 3

Effect: Your next Attack may use two Weapons at the same time, treating them like a Synchronized Attack, whose cost in Genre Points has already been paid for, with all the qualities of both Weapons.

Description: To the Custos, there was no such thing as being too careful in regards to protecting the mothership. Just in case that the more-or-less literal rain of fire wasn't enough, it launched a preposterous amount of missiles to boot – when it was all over, none of the Wagner's escorts were still there.

### Disturbing Presence

Speed: Called

Cost: X

Effect: Increase your Tension by X until end of Operation.

Description: The walls of the colony shook, and from a nearby hill a tubular thing that no one had ever seen sprung. Its forward end opened, and dozens of Cryptids crawled out from inside, more than everyone could count. The Military Police defensive line was overrun almost instantly and everyone, even the creatures within the Gears themselves, felt afraid.



## Aberrant Skills

Aberrant Skills are more or less superpowers, and as such belong entirely to Cryptids and Outsiders. They allow one to manipulate the environment, the self, and even the minds of others. Their effects range from the subtle pull of gravity to the fiery brutality of pyrokinesis.

Aberrant Skills tend to **go haywire on a failed Test**, inflicting **Damage on the user** equal to **the amount you missed the DN by**. The effects of these Skills **take an Action to manifest** and require **another Action every Turn** if they are to be maintained at length.

### Force

Similar to the mythic power known as Telekinesis, the Force Skill controls kinetic forces between objects and is essentially the control of local gravity. Force may be used to send items (or people) in a particular direction, to change the trajectories of projectiles, an even to temporarily fly. Force may affect targets within your immediate vicinity only - usually up to your line of sight.

Force has multiple uses, the subtler approaches will use **Intellect**. While Tests that try to apply the *brute force* method, make use of your **Fitness**.

#### Possible Specializations:

Deflecting Projectiles, Fine Manipulation of Objects, Levitation, Pulling Objects to your Hand, Telekinetic Strikes.

#### Possible Advantages:

Local gravity is in your favor, subject is cooperative, object is very light or has little mass.

#### Possible Disadvantages:

Local gravity is working against you, trying to reflect projectiles back to their source, object is heavy or has a large mass.

#### Sample Tests:

Gently moving an object or willing person (yourself included) your size in a single direction (DN 5), altering the course of bullets coming at you just enough so they miss (DN Opposing Test), creating your own gravity well (DN 20).

### Not a Complete Monster

The use of Aberrant abilities will make a definite impact, and their modular nature lets you keep switching them up and comboing them with other options so that you can keep PCs on their toes.

Just remember that you're not there to kill the PCs, but to give them a good challenge, and that you're not supposed to make the Players themselves suffer but to entertain them, and that everyone has different levels of tolerance to challenge and hardships in their games of pretend.

## Somatics

Somatics induces the body of the user (or another) to overexert itself and achieve superhuman physical feats. Anything from superstrength to senses sharper than those of any living creature, from supernatural regeneration to moving so fast you leave a visible blur behind you. The reverse effects may be applied to others Offensively as well. All uses of Somatics require the target to be touched.

Somatics Tests are Help Tests capable of enhancing yourself, and their effects may be made lasting with constant effort. Another possible use for Somatics is for Healing Tests to heal yourself or another of Physical Consequences. Offensive Somatics Tests are Physical threats and inflict Disadvantages as the Disrupt Action or deal internal injuries to the target - your choice. All three uses are keyed to **Fitness** as the Attribute of choice.

#### Possible Specializations:

Healing, Inflicting internal wounds, Physical Boosts, Physical Weakening.

#### Possible Advantages:

Anything that makes touching someone easier.

#### Possible Disadvantages:

Anything that makes touching someone harder.

#### Sample Tests:

As Help, Healing, Offensive and Disruption Tests.

### Allowing Aberrant Options

It is bound to happen – at some point one of your Players will ask if they can use one of these with their PC. As usual, it is up to you if and how that should be done, but a few guidelines can be provided.

Consider if the PC is one that is having trouble keeping up with the amount of screentime that the others have, since these options aren't just powerful – they make you super special, if they already are up there then you should probably go with a negative.

If they are on the weaker side of the field and the grass does really look kind of brown over there, then consider making one or more of the options presented available. Make said Aberrant options relevant from a story standpoint to retain their flavor, that alone will go a long way in making the PC special – maybe the Foundation grafts Cryptid organs into an Operative, maybe a PC from Hiryu is given access to an Outsider-turned-Gear, or maybe a guerilla member returns from Zone 11... changed.

If you don't think the PC is weak enough to warrant the boost but the Player really wants it, then you may want to get craftier and offer them a faustian deal – Power, at a price.

A word of forewarning, if you use any of the following suggestions, do take note that they carry some strong tradeoffs, this is an incentive for folks to not try and start pimping their Gears with alien technology left and right. However, if you're comfortable with your Players being stronger than the norm at no real mechanical loss, you can make the drawback of fiddling with things they don't understand purely a roleplaying one – it is that much more rewarding, as a GM, when you make a Player care more about losing favor with an NPC than a mechanical penalty.



## Phantasm

You possess the power to craft illusions and mirages that can be just as convincing as the real thing. You must concentrate and clearly visualize (or an equivalent when fooling other senses) what it is you want others to perceive – or what it is you don't want them to perceive, if you are trying to render an object or person invisible to their naked senses. Your illusions are no more or less than implanting sensory perception into the victim so hard that the effects might as well be real. This can probably be explained by experts as some sort of quantum mechanics shenanigans, probably using magnets. Phantasms may be projected within your immediate vicinity only - usually up to your line of sight.

Phantasm Tests make use of **Intellect** and Test against the Mental Defense of onlookers. At the cost of suffering a Disadvantage, Phantasm may be used as a mental attack, crafting an illusion so realistic they can force others into truly feel their effects (like shooting someone with an illusionary gun) and they will suffer damage equal to how much the DN was passed by.

### Possible Specializations:

Sounds, Disguises, Invisibility, Light Shows, Nightmarish Visions.

### Possible Advantages:

Appropriate environment, victim is in a suggestive state, user spends considerable time visualizing the phantasm before manifestation.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Unbelievable conditions, victim suspects something is wrong, user has difficulty concentrating.

### Sample Tests:

A swarm of buzzing bees no greater in size than yourself, imitating another's looks and voice, changing the writing on a letter (All DN Mental Defense).

## Temperature

This Skill enables control over the unseen thermal forces around your person, for a multitude of effects. Temperature is easier to control according to your mood. If you are calm, it is easier to make the environment colder and if you are excited, then heat proves simpler to generate.

You need to be within an environment with oxygen in order to use this power, and it will not work even in a partial vacuum. For as long as you are in proper conditions, you may perform an **Empathy** based Test to influence your surroundings, generally no further than your Zone.

You may use this Skill to damage others physically with flames or try and freeze them, but it will require the environment to provide a source, such as a bonfire or windy frost. Attempting an Offensive Test in an improper environment will be at a Disadvantage. You may create these conditions on your own, but you need to stop maintaining the effects to make your attack.

### Possible Specializations:

Gases, Environment, Liquids, Offensive Tests, Solids.

### Possible Advantages:

A suitable environment (such as a sub zero temperature room or one that is on fire), being in the proper emotional state (such as being soothing or violent) or affecting materials that are naturally suitable (such as nitrogen with cold or flammables with heat) according to the specific application of the Skill.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Improper environment, emotional state, or materials for the effect you are trying to achieve.

### Sample Tests:

Acting like a glorified microwave or air conditioner (DN 5), actually making people feel uncomfortably hot or cold (DN 10), creating the conditions for an Offensive Temperature Test (DN 15), you generate so much heat or cold that you can make an area freeze over, or melt metal (DN 20).

## Gear Penalties for Aberrant Options

### Alien:

Other Allies cannot restore the Unit's Threshold, not with Genre Powers or with the Support Action, ever.

### Overheating:

When they roll a 1 on either an Accuracy or Penetration Test the weapon malfunctions and the Unit loses its next Action.

### Unstable:

A crucial powerup to the Unit such as a Special Mode, Combining, and the like has a time limit of 1d5 Rounds after which they stop functioning and may not be used again for the rest of the Operation.

## Actor Penalties for Aberrant Options

### Rejection:

At the beginning of an Episode the PC is victim of an Offensive Test of 1d10 + one of the PC's own Attributes to a Defense of the GM's choice - though both must always be the same if this event repeats itself. The Damage inflicted by this Test does not go away until the Episode has ended.

### Weakened:

Whenever the Character takes Damage to a specific Plot Armor of the GM's choice, double the amount of Damage dealt.

### Torturous:

When failing to meet a Test's DN by 10 or more, take a Disadvantage to every Test for the rest of the Intermission.

## Probing

The human mind is a fragile thing, and you may exploit the raw unfiltered subconsciousnesses of people. Particularly concentrated efforts can let you manipulate them with the art of suggestion without them ever realizing it. No matter the application, You must have line of sight with the subject, and must concentrate on reading them for as long as you continue to attempt using this Skill.

At its simplest Probing will let you read surface thoughts as words and images by testing it together with **Empathy** versus the subject's Emotional Defense. You may turn this into an Offensive Test at a Disadvantage to inflict Wisdom Damage on them, playing the role of voice inside their head, asking them questions they will answer to and convincing them that listening to the devil on their shoulder is a good idea, you may even try and force their imaginations to see things they usually wouldn't.

Repeated failed attempts, unobvious questions, and generally suspicious uses of this Skill will provoke suspicion on the subject, once they become paranoid they will start to look for something to blame it on - and you better be damn sure their intuition will lead them to you.

### Possible Specializations:

Daydreaming, Introspection, Self-Doubt, Spreading Mistrust, Stirring Anger.

### Possible Advantages:

Subject is unconscious, has good reason to do what you are suggesting or to question what you want to ask them.

### Possible Disadvantages:

Subject is very focused on the task at hand, decidedly against the suggestion, or even of exploring a question.

### Sample Tests:

Reading another's mood, finding out what accomplishment another person is most proud of, giving a sleeping victim nightmares (All DN Emotional Defense)

## Aberrant Traits

Aberrant Traits represent abilities that are intrinsic to certain beings, but definitely out of the reach of normal people.

Like most Traits, these do not require a concentrated effort to be used, all Aberrant Traits are **Major**.

## Flight

You may take to the skies and move in three dimensions for any length of time. You can fly by your own power in any direction and may sustain flight indefinitely - even remaining in place - without requiring a running start or the favor of the winds. You can move much like you would on foot but without actually using any limbs.

## Regeneration

You are incredibly difficult to put down, recovering from anything that doesn't outright kill or cripple you physically in record time. At the beginning of your Turn you remove any Dent Damage (and its Consequence) to your Grit Plot Armor, this also speeds up the healing rate of other Layers. A Crack will heal after the conflict that dealt it is over, a Breach will heal after a Scene has passed, and if the Plot Armor is Ajar its Damage and Consequence will vanish at the end of the current Episode.

## Seer

You possess uncanny Extra Sensory Perception that provides you with subtle clues about specific things and warns you of impending danger, but it expresses itself in odd manners - perhaps you feel a certain pressure from things you believe to be important, or you can hear the ringing of a bell when something is threatening you, or maybe information comes to you during lucid dreams. Seer grants you an Advantage to any Investigation Tests you make, inflicts a Disadvantage to Deceive Tests against you, renders you immunity to Surprise Rounds, and may allow you to receive other hints by GM fiat.

## Magnetism

There is something special about you, you have an unique charm to yourself and yet, attract others to your person with the seductive mystery of one with many secrets - which, to be fair, is probably true given you've got this Trait. This strange eerie quality grants you double the Modifier from Skills to all Empathy based Deceit, Diplomacy and Presence Tests.

## Mindless

You cannot be reasoned with in any way, shape or form. In your single mindedness, however, you may still be fooled - and are particularly vulnerable to the logic bomb approach. Emotional attacks have no effect whatsoever on you, but mental ones deal double the amount of Damage if they are successful.

## Osmose

You blur the line between man and machine, like a true surreal nightmare freak show, and are able to absorb various substances and man-made devices or even implant objects into your body, disassembling and reassembling them at will to make them fit. You may carry objects within your body without using up your hands or suffering their weight - though you may not carry more your own mass inside you, and further assimilation will force the items to stick out of your body at their full weight. You may reassemble and draw out items stored this way with a thought, and may even materialize them as 'limbs' that you can use as if they were part of your body.



## The Aberrant Archetype

The Aberrant Archetype is the best way to represent giant monsters that cannot be Gears, because they just aren't mechanical, and instead are purely biological monstrosities.

### Aberrant Designs

#### Stuff of Nightmares:

At the beginning of every one of your Turns, restore your Threshold by 1d10. This will not go back past lost Levels of Threshold nor will it undo Maimed Areas.

#### Probability Shell:

You may spend 1 Energy to force an attack against you to reroll its Accuracy or Penetration Test, and to keep the new result even if it is worse, once per offensive Action. An Accuracy Test must be rerolled before the Penetration Test is made.

#### Vanishing:

After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d5. On a roll equal to or higher than the Accuracy of the Gear that attacked you, you successfully evade its Attack.

#### One-Of-Many:

Weapons lacking the Blast quality or another ability to strike an area instead of a specific target are at a Disadvantage to their Accuracy and Penetration Tests against you.

### Aberrant Upgrades

Aberrant Upgrades have a simple principle in mind – PCs that approach enemies using them with conventional tactics will very likely see themselves on the losing team, fast.

They exist to throw the PCs for a loop, and are substantially more powerful than normal Upgrades – if also more conditional.

#### All Become One

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Description: Cryptids are well known for their ability to permanently and forcefully remove an Actor from the picture, and some have evolved superior methods to do this as a defense mechanism, being one of the most terrifying things one can face on the field.

Effect: When one of your Aberrant type Weapons deals Assimilation Damage, double the amount dealt to the Actor.

Enhancements: For an additional 3 UP the final Assimilation Damage from your Aberrant Weapons increases by +1, you may purchase this Enhancement five times.

#### Beam Reflector

Areas: Torso

Cost: 7

Description: One of the most terrifying abilities demonstrated by Outsiders and Cryptids is their innate control of Element G derived technology. Even though the energy reactions used by Beam armament are an entirely different phenomenon, they may bend the pathways created by Gygravagnite particles to deflect or outright reflect said Beams.

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you with a Beam Type Weapon, you may spend 1 Energy and roll 1d10. On a roll equal to or higher than the Accuracy of the Gear plus that of the Weapon that attacked you, you successfully evade the Attack and now Test Accuracy and then Penetration against the enemy with their Weapon, but using your own Enhancements.

Enhancements: For an additional 2 UP, you may add +1 to the reflection roll. You may purchase this Enhancement up to four times.

#### Damage Sponge

Areas: Torso

Cost: 10

Description: Cryptids can assimilate nearly anything into their physical forms, so it stands to reason that at some point one of them would develop the ability to immunize itself to weaponry it has been previously exposed to.

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage by a Weapon you've already been Damaged by previously during this Operation you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Attack by 10.

Enhancements: For an additional 10 UP, you may instead spend 2 Energy to restore your Threshold by 1d10 when using this Upgrade. This may restore you past lost Threshold Levels and it undoes the respective Maim status when it does so, healing the Area back to normal.

#### Booster

Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Description: Almost an exclusive to non-humanoids, which is to say shuttles, giant monsters from outer space, and small construction mechanoids with a few weapons strapped to them, among others. Gears must unfortunately resort to the cheaper but specialized alternatives.

Effect: You are always considered to be under the effects of Anti-Gravity at no Energy cost.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP, this Upgrade even applies in non-atmospherical environments.

### Iron Giant

Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Description: Some enemies are just too damn big to move around, it is simply not possible. However, that same size will make it extremely difficult to punch through their defenses, let alone to take out entire sections of them as you would for smaller targets.

Effect: You cannot Move at all for any reason, however any time a Penetration Test would be made against you, it halves the bonus it would usually receive from Accuracy (rounding down), this is in addition to any other modifiers it would usually receive.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP, you are immune to Maiming.

### Scrap Offering

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 3

Description: You reduce a loyal minion to raw resources.

Effect: As an Action, you may sacrifice a willing Ally to restore 1d10+10 Threshold, once per Operation. This will heal back past lost Levels of Threshold, repairing Maimed Areas back to normal. This works on Sub-Units.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

### Debilitate

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 3

Description: Your assimilation powers can severely weaken nearby Gears without even the need to touch them in the first place.

Effect: As an Action, you may Impart a Condition of your choice between Immobilize, Expose or IFF Failure on any one Enemy once per Operation.

Enhancements: For an additional 1 UP you may use this ability another time per Operation, you may purchase this Enhancement twice.

### Awakening

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 10

Description: Some slumbering beasts you really, really want to let lie. the problem is that you can never tell apart the Outsider that is legitimately lethargic from the one that is just slow to rouse.

Effect: When your Tension is of 10 or higher, you may spend 1d5 Genre Points. If you do, you may take a second Action after your first until End of Operation. You may not take two Offensive Actions this way. Enhancements: For an additional 10 UP you may take two Offensive Actions this way.

### Aggressor

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 5

Description: An enemy with little to no self preservation instinct will always go all out, and one of the greatest perils in facing them is that at some point you will make a mistake, and they will capitalize on it and exploit it mercilessly.

Effect: After destroying an Enemy, your Tension raises by 1.

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP, after dealing Damage to an Enemy your Tension increases by 1.

### Implacable

Areas: Core or Head

Cost: 10

Description: Some of the most dangerous of enemies are those with conviction so strong they are never demoralized, but, in fact, invigorated by a strong opposition, and are brutal to the point that hurting them only seems to make them stronger.

Effect: After an Ally is destroyed, your Tension raises by 1.

Enhancements: For an additional 10 UP, after receiving Damage your Tension increases by 1.

### Gygravagnite Charge

Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Description: You release a bewildering thick cloud of fog-like particles, fine control of your Unit is difficult while remaining in this cloud and the more difficult actions like attacking an enemy are outright impossible. The fog is not defensive in nature, either, instead it transforms foreign particle-wave matter into a form of energy that the Gear can use.

Effect: For as long as this mode is activated you may not take Offensive Actions, but you regenerate Energy every time you take Damage, equal to half the amount of Damage taken (rounding down).

Enhancements: For an additional 5 UP while this ability is activated you no longer halve the Energy gained.

### Multiple Stages

Areas: None

Cost: The Cost of the chosen Upgrades and half the Cost of the chosen Weapons (rounding up).

Description: Your Unit comes in multiple Stages, this differs from other Variable Forms in that there is no way to change back once transformed, but it comes with a considerable power boost.

Effect: When you lose the Nominal Level of Threshold you may spend 1d5 Genre Points. If you do, you gain access to all the chosen Upgrades (fully enhanced), the chosen Weapons, and restore your Threshold and Energy back to full, healing any Maimed Areas back to normal as well. You cannot be destroyed until all your Stages have been defeated, unless you fail to activate them.

Enhancements: You may purchase up to two new instances of this Upgrade after the first, assigning them to the Superficial and Critical Threshold Levels, though you must spend 1d5 Genre Points to activate them individually as well.



## Aberrant Weapons

Aberrant Weapons are exclusively the domain of Cryptids and their assimilation powers. If you are going to use them, do so with care, but make sure they play a prominent role in your game. There is a good reason the encroachment abilities of Cryptids are terrifying. Any time a Weapon with the Assimilation Special Ability hits a Gear, its Actor is dealt Plot Armor Damage in equal final values, targeted at the type indicated between parenthesis. Assimilate (Fitness) will Damage the Character's Grit, for instance. All Aberrant Weapons have their own damage type (Aberrant) making them that much harder to block than most other types.

### Merge

Areas: Arms

Cost: 5

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: +5

Energy: 2

Special: Aberrant, Assimilate (Fitness)

Description: The Cryptid latches on to its victim with a tentacle or other such appendage, dissolving the limb and the affected equipment into a single chunk of gooish biomass, eating away not just at the bodywork of the Gear itself but also spreading its encroaching presence within the Core, from which any and all forms of physical impairment may affect the Actor at the helm.

### Mindscan

Areas: Head

Cost: 5

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: +3

Energy: 1

Special: Aberrant, Assimilate (Intellect)

Description: The Cryptid projects a gaseous, bright cone that goes through most substances – including many Gear's armor. If a sapient being comes into contact with said substance, it will begin to consume its knowledge and memories, eroding their very sense of reality

### Parasite

Areas: Any Non-Core

Cost: 5

Range: 0-8

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +2

Energy: 3

Special: Aberrant, Assimilate (Empathy)

Description: Small grotesque abominations the size of a human hand that latch to most known derivatives of Gygrav-agnite alloys and cause cancerous crystals to grow on the impacted surface, the crystals slowly exhume gases and sporelike substances in the direction of the Cryptid until the creature expires within a minute – anything within a Gear that is under the effects of the parasite, and even the Gear itself (in the case of a biological Gear), will slowly begin to become hollow husks devoid of the will to do anything.

### Possession

Areas: Torso

Cost: 6

Range: 0-10

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: +4

Energy: 6

Special: Aberrant, Assimilate (All), After being Damaged by this Weapon, the Target must Attack one of its Allies with a Weapon of your choice. If the target is defeated by this Weapon, it rises again at full health as a Cryptid instead.

Description: A strange pattern of energy that the human eye cannot perceive emerges from the Cryptid's chest and zigzags erratically across the battlefield, coiling and jumping around until it meets its target. Upon impact, the Gear and its occupants will be engulfed by what can only be described as an impossible color, anything within will lose control of their own bodies and proceed to helplessly feel watched by an uncountable number of presences all too willing to make this dark happenstance a permanent one. Thankfully enough, the effect usually fades after a number of seconds and most Gears can withstand the first strike. Those few unlucky ones that did not, however, were never heard from again, and no one can say for sure what the final fate of the Actors inside was.

## Effects of Encroachment

Injury received from other events is easy enough to visualize – it happens in real life and fiction all the time. But representing damage dealt to the Actor from Encroachment type Weapons can be more difficult, as the effects are generally not immediately obvious until they get very serious.

Here you have a few examples to get you on the way – they make full use of the fact that Consequences are temporary to give the PCs conditions that are otherwise uncommon.

**Dent:** Minor joint pain, uncontrollable shaking, egomaniacal insensitivity.

**Crack:** Palpitations or general anemia, constant flashbacks, loss of confidence.

**Breach:** Blindness, fugue state, fits of psychotic violence.

**Ajar:** Motor function loss, total amnesia, attempts at suicide.

## The Rogue's Gallery

The next section includes a number of premade NPCs for use in and out of Operations, those of Rival Tier and higher possess a single Dramatic Theme. This Dramatic Theme can be from any one of the three categories that Pilots possess, but since they do not gain Genre out of it, it is mostly as a guideline for their use in the hands of the GM.

It is important to note that you should not take these NPCs as 'Canonical', they are merely examples ready to be dropped into your game at a moment's notice if you don't feel like coming up with your own, but in no way are they meant to be the One True Representation of what someone in their roles is like, or that they are crucial to the setting in the case of those with Names.

### Sample Non-Combatant Mooks

#### Hiryu Monk

Upholders of Hiryu's religious traditions come from nearly any walk of life. The vast majority are people concerned either with the metaphysical or societal aspects of religion - some use it to make sense of the world, others value the sense of unity it gives people. While all initiates receive similar training, males generally emphasize their practice so as to teach future generations how to master their bodies.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	1	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
3	3	3

**Skills:** Athletics +3, Combat +2 (Unarmed), Dexterity +1

#### SDF Techie

The Soaring Dragon Fortress employs some of the finest minds that can be found in the planet and they don't just let anyone put their grubby little hands on their precious technology. Their staff is thus highly capable, proven after years of study at a formal academy and with the senior engineers looking forward to a future of joining the big fish in the base.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
0	3	0
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
1	1	1

**Skills:** Academics +3, Electronics +3, Machinery +2

#### Guerilla Agent

The would-be femme fatales and double zeros of the resistance may not live up to their romanticized counterparts, but that also makes them stand out a lot less. Instead of sweet-talking their way everywhere, they do the more practical thing and pass as regular joes and janes, relying on misdirection and subterfuge to go entirely unnoticed for days, months, and even years.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	2	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	2	2

**Skills:** Deceit +2, Stealth +2





## Civilian Burglar

Many people in Safe Zones resort to less than savory measures to feed themselves and their families. Their lives are nothing like the romanticized organized crime, more often than not civilians from ghettos have no choice but to rob each other, else they risk the ire of the ironically named Civil Protection.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	1	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	2	2

**Skills:** Athletics +2, Dexterity +2, Stealth +2

## Verne Worker

The ever dependable, hard working populace of Verne I is much better composed than their hedonistic bosses – and a lot more paranoid as well. They are wary of the Foundation and the rumors that surround them, but not enough to not be swayed by the right choice of words or “material encouragement.”

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	0	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
3	1	1

**Skills:** Craftsmanship +3, Machinery +3

## Verne Reporter

Where there's mysteries and a consumer society, there's media hungry for ratings and news willing to chase a good story until they catch it. Verne's scoop hunters are determined to cover the giant robots walking the streets placing their lives on the line and underhanded enough to trick anyone who makes the mistake to talk into saying something they will later regret.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	1	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
1	1	3

**Skills:** Dexterity +1, Investigate +3, Stealth +1

## Sample Non-Combatant Elites

### Hiryu Priestess

Deeply respected on the island, the priestesses are the center of Hiryu's cultural beliefs and upholders of many a tradition that would have otherwise perished in the many disasters the people of the Far West Archipelago have endured throughout generations. Just like monks carry on their duties to try and instill discipline on the young, many a priestess is an able negotiator interested in the wellbeing of the community at large.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	1	5
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	5	6

**Skills:** Academics +1, Athletics +1, Diplomacy +2

### Mafia Contact

It is a reality that Hiryu needs to partake in seedy deals, and they come in many forms – though the most well known are those who trade common goods from what is left of Eastern Asia. If you know someone with connections, and they don't make themselves hard to find, you can get pretty much anything that can be made in the outside world in as little as a few weeks' time – faster if you're willing to pay extra.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	2	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	4	4

**Skills:** Combat +3, Deceit +1, Stealth +1

**Traits:** Resourceful

### UEF Recruit

Whether they are part of Civil Protection, Cadets that didn't make the cut to Enact, or even paid mercenaries there is one thing that most non-Actors in the UEF have in common – they're trained to be little more than being thugs without much subtlety or tact.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	0	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
6	3	2

**Skills:** Athletics +2, Combat +3, Dexterity +1, Diplomacy +2 (Intimidation), Stealth +1, Machinery +1

## Sanctuary Dilettante

Not many make it into the Sanctuary Districts as civilians by their own merit, those who do are relatively well-learned folk that charmed one or more influential people with their artistic merits or honeyed tongues. And you can darn well bet that they're not going to let go of that advantage they've got for anything in the world.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
0	2	4
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	1	4

**Skills:** Craftsmanship +3 (Art), Diplomacy +3 (Seduction), Presence +3 (Blather)

**Traits:** Criminal Mind

## Clarke Physician

The Foundation goes through many troubles to keep its Operatives safe and healthy – as safe and healthy as they can be when undescrivable things are constantly eating away at the very core of their beings. Clarke's medical budget is ever-increasing, and for good reason. Their doctors need to practically be omniscientists to figure out what is wrong with every particular Actor and how to help get them back up and running.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
0	2	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	5	6

**Skills:** Academics +3, Diplomacy +2 (Motivation), Investigation +2 (Diagnosis)

**Traits:** Scholastics (Medicine), Unshippable

## Military Police Officer

Verne II's finest aren't as battle-hardened as their Earthling counterparts, but they've got the advantage of an education, good training, and a very insular organization backing them up. Verne's MP are generally well equipped and have plenty of officers, so if the main peacekeeping body in the Colonies has a bone to pick with you then chances are you have worse problems than their literal firepower.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	3	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
5	5	2

**Skills:** Athletics +1, Combat +2, Diplomacy +1, Investigation +2

**Traits:** Jaded

## Generic Actor/Actress

The GAF, UEF and SSA employ a great number of Gears, and they have a correspondingly large number of soldiers to Enact them. They are all well-trained and know the right amount of tactics to make the best use of their general purpose Gears, while still being formidable enemies out of the cockpit should they be forced outside, and more than capable of making it back safely on their own afterwards.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	2	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	4	4

**Skills:** Athletics +1, Combat +3, Stealth +1, Survival +3

## Anti-Personnel Board

The bread and butter of the UEF's civil policy, AP Boards are seen patrolling the ghettos, enforcing all of the UEF's laws with harsh efficiency. With the rise of any alarm, you can be sure that Boards will be the first responders, finding and brutally putting the criminals down.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	1	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
5	2	2

**Skills:** Combat +4

**Traits:** Mindless





## Sample Allied Elites

### BGM-001 Revolution

When the conflict with the UEF was made public and the resistance revealed itself to the public, they did so with only one model of Gear at their disposal: the versatile 'Revolution.' Though far from being the most powerful Gear available these days, it remains a solid all-purpose suit average in almost every aspect, crafted to do battle with the UEF's Dominion and Majesty without losing ground to the RUF's Bravery.

Revolution Squads usually have half the Units send in their Indirect Weapons first trying to single out enemies and sow chaos in their lines while the rest back them up from a distance, reloading and repairing each other as necessary to keep up the pressure.



#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

#### Area Capacity

Core 6/20	Head 1/10	Torso 7/10	Arms 7/10	Legs 6/10	Remote 3
Support Fire	Vulcans	Beam Canceller	Ensnaring Wires	Jury-Rig	Indirect Weapon
Expert Enabler			Long Rifle	Reload	

### VMP-003 Nautilus

Enacted by the Verne Military Police's finest, the Nautilus are typically only deployed within the confines of Verne II and are as equipped to handle dissidents as they are to deal with Cryptid incidents - at least theoretically.

Although the SSA is in possession of many Boards to fill its frontline ranks without placing their precious small population at risk, its leaders wanted a mass producible Gear of their own that could beat the UEF's in performance, and the Nautilus is that unit.

Specializing in long range encounters and defensive tactics, Nautilus Actors are trained to attack from as safe a distance as humanly possible, resupply, and either retreat to another safe spot or continue their assault.



#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

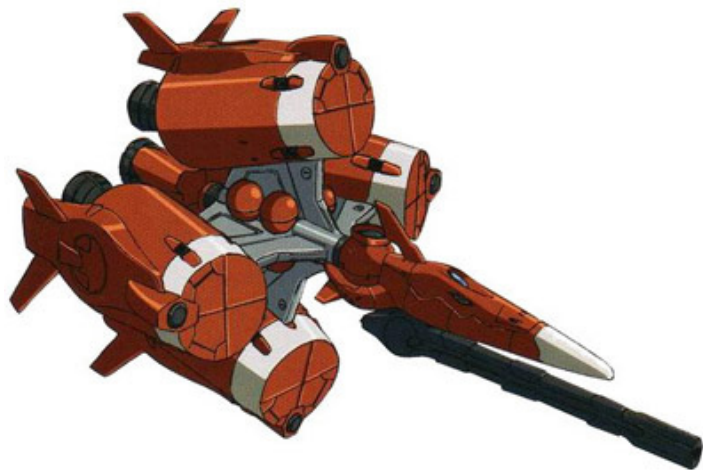
#### Area Capacity

Core 6/10	Head 1/10	Torso 11/15	Arms 9/15	Legs 3/10
Sacrifice	Vulcans	ECS	Portable Shield	Resupply
Guardian Maneuver		Heavy Railgun	Missile Pod	

## BMA-099 Danube

After decades of research on automated weapons, the SSA - or what is left of it - believe they have reached the peak of the power-to-size equation. The Danube is a hovering Unit compatible with both 0-G and atmospherical environments that can operate for very large amounts of time on its own and packs quite a punch.

Despite being flimsier than practically every Gear out there, its speed and multiple high-yield all-range energy weapons make it a fearsome enemy should it have a tactical edge on a stronger foe - from advantageous terrain to sheer numbers.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 20/20	Front 3/10	Center 3/10	Wings 2/10	Back 2/10
G-Buster	Beam Cannon	Scattering Beam	Beam Rifle	Maglev
Supercharged				Vernier Thrusters

## Sample Allied Rivals

### Actress Candidate Noa Shimabara

A tomboyish and enthusiastic ex-Priestess turned Actor candidate, Noa has a strong sense of fairness and selflessness that occasionally gets the best of her. She used to be very popular with the people for her straightforward nature, and though she is less active these days due to the constant training, she still attends the Mt. Barou shrine and helps with the duties there.

Although she has a good predisposition to the rest of the SDF's Actors - despite a tinge of jealousy due to lacking her own Gear at the time - she will not hesitate to personally knock on their doors the moment they start to make mistakes that hurt the populace or try and take advantage of their position. If ignored, she might use the shrine's weight to convince the PC's superiors to make them pay or turn Hiryu's people against them.

Perhaps due to her family running a liquor store, she can outdrink most people and the boost to her confidence makes her someone you don't want to cross.

#### Dramatic Theme: Hotblooded.

Noa is not one for politics or gray morality zones - she wants to do what she believes is right and damned be anyone who stands in her way. She likes to go out and make sure people's problems are solved, by her own hand if necessary. This has given her a few enemies with Hiryu's mercantile backers, having busted into their business more than a few times to stop them from extorting folks, and she has made it publically known that in her opinion they could afford to be less demanding.



Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	0	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
8	2	2

**Skills:** Athletics +2, Combat +2, Diplomacy +2

**Traits:** Always Changing, Like a Flash, Decadence, Martial Artist

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Ready for Another Go, Unyielding Will, Come at Me Bro



## Communications Officer Joey John

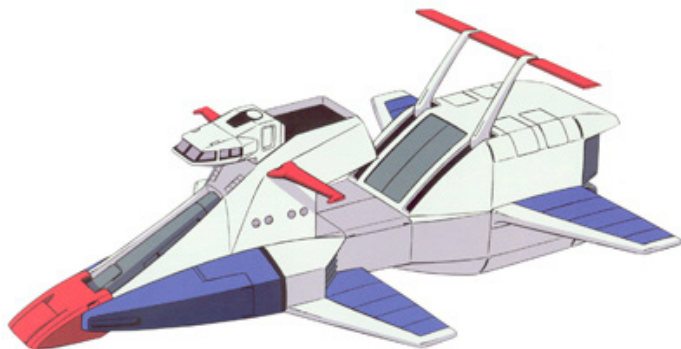
Joey is a young and bright man, with a certain glow to him in no small part due to his anglosaxon looks, he has the outlook on life and attitude of someone full of himself. Currently he is the primary operator of the Foundation's Nine-Billion.

Joey spent most of his early years in Verne III, as one of the privileged who had the luxury of being able to live the good life, thanks to the influence of his family in the local industry, and grew up to be an excellent electronics technician.

One day he dug in a bit too deep into one of daddy's databases and caught a glimpse of what Clarke and the Cryptids really were about. After a series of misventures he found himself working for them.

### Dramatic Theme: Irreverent.

Despite being a self-professed "Genius Linguist Playboy" Joey has difficulty proving any of those at any given time. He will hit on female PCs and try to impress them with his knowledge of multiple languages, technology and will abuse big words until it is made painfully obvious that they're not interested – the painfully obvious part might have to be literal. Should he either 'get a catch', be rejected, or be surrounded by people with an Y chromosome he will instead near-constantly crack jokes about subjects that are not what one might call politically correct until people either shun him or somehow convince him to stop being idiotic.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	10	6	0	0

### Area Capacity

Bridge 10/10	Antenna 6/10	Hull 12/20	Turrets 8/10	Stern 4/10
Moving Repository	Reload	Friction Field	Lux Cannon	Anti-Gravity
	Resupply	Vulcans	Resonance Cannon	Vernier Thrusters
		Extremophile		

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	3	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	3	4

**Skills:** Academics +1, Electronics +3 (Communications, Hacking)

**Traits:** Adaptable Mind, Stack the Odds  
Genius, Polyglot (Spanish, Italian, French)

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Guiding Hand

The Weakest Link, Confusion in the Ranks

### CFSV-001 Nine Billion

Designed and tested to withstand conditions of extremes pressure, temperature and radiation, the Nine Billion is a sphere the size of a cargo plane, considerably smaller than other craft meant to transport Gears, and barely does so when there is absolutely no other option for mission completion. The Nine Billion has a few experimental weapons, but its primary purpose is to pick up and transport captured Assets back to the Foundation in secrecy, functioning much like a futuristic black van or helicopter for in-and-off-colony use.

The Nine Billion requires only one operator, though having two more people would certainly help control the various systems faster, it is not meant for support in the field outside of leaving a token spare portable caches of ammo or Type-R E-Caps, though this is not so much because they like to help, but because command says it builds dependency. When threatened, its operators are instructed to deploy their clouds of nanomachines and make a quick retreat.

Should the Nine Billion be forced to take up the fight it has two aces up its sleeve: First is its Lux Cannon, a commendable effort on making any kind of enemy possible to hit, but ultimately an unreliable experiment as the laser itself just ends up pointing in the general direction of the target. Considerably more useful is the Resonance Cannon, which, after analysing a target's physical structure with the Nine Billion's sensors, retaliates with a high-pitched sonar blast using the same wavelength as the enemy's composition, dealing them massive damage.

## Sample Allied Bosses

### Professor Shozo Wakamoto

The 44 years old Professor is the leader and founder of the Hiryu branch of the Guerilla, believed to be behind the research and development of the island's exceptionally powerful Gears and of the Soaring Dragon Fortress itself. Not much is known about his past, and he prefers to keep it that way - if pressed for information, he makes vague allegories to the pre-Outsider era that are only tangentially related to any questions asked.

With an obvious firm knowledge both theoretical and practical of Element G derived technology, not a day goes by in which the guerilla is not glad to have him on their side. Shozo was the one that declared Hiryu's independence on a speech that was broadcasted even on American soil thanks to the effort of RHUF insiders.

On the rare occasion he is not hard at work, Shozo often spends his time inside his office like any good recluse, devouring books of all sorts from classic platonic philosophy to modern parapsychology - except fiction, for he thinks fiction is pretentious wish fulfillment.

#### Dramatic Theme: Voice of Reason.

Shozo Wakamoto is a born straight man, whether he likes it or not, his excellent composure and unflippant demeanor make him an excellent leader and advisor, a skill he has polished over time, and his elegant voice makes a mark on anyone who listens to him for a prolonged period of time.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	4	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	8	8

**Skills:** Academics +3, Craftsmanship +2, Diplomacy +4, Electronics +5, Presence +1

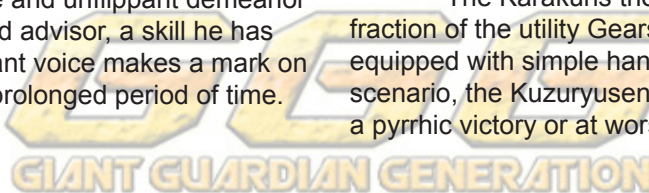
**Traits:** Experienced Veteran, Practice Makes Perfect, Facility (Soaring Dragon Fortress), Unshippable

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Director, Target Lock, Almighty Champion, With Extreme Prejudice

### HMR-00 Soaring Dragon Fortress

The eponymous 'Hiryu' of the island and its 'Karakuri' automated Gears, the SDF itself and the Automated Gears are obviously the very last line of defense against Outsiders before they're free to rampage around the rest of the Pacific -and beyond- as much as they want. Fortunately for those involved, the fortress itself is as impressive in performance as it is visually, and where its Karakuris and Gunners don't prove to be enough it may still use its terrifying Kuzuryusen cannon as a last ditch effort, at the cost of destroying a grand portion of the vicinity it is supposed to protect.

The Karakuris themselves are simple Gears, with a fraction of the utility Gears with Actors possess, their Gears equipped with simple handheld weaponry. In a worst case scenario, the Kuzuryusen may be activated to assure either a pyrrhic victory or at worst mutual destruction.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
13	13	13	13	5	5

### Area Capacity

Bridge 15/15	Head 1/10	Torso 6/15	Claws 1/10	Tail 2/10	Aide 10	Enhancements 55
Curtain Fire	Vulcans	Giga Blaster	CQC	Drill	Long Rifle	Evasion 5
Team Player						Armor 5
Iron Wall						Threshold 5
						Energy 5
						Accuracy 5
						Penetration 5
						Team Player 5
						Iron Wall 1



## Captain Ethan Stone

A gruff old-timer that still remembers what the battlefield was like well before giant robots were all over the place, and tasked with watching over the border with the Nevada Safe Zone. Captain Stone is not a man of many words, but when his sights are set he never misses the mark - he's a veteran of wars old and new, and didn't make it to the oldest acting Officer in the RUF by luck alone.

Stone used to be part of the UEF's Air Force, he himself took part of many a nocturnal raid to quell terrorists threatening the Orbital Elevators, and suppressed many young men and women of the still unnamed RUF back in his day. Since he quite never settled down as a family man, it didn't take him long to switch sides and provide the RUF with his much needed practical expertise.

He is actually quite the learned man regarding the fine arts, and will gladly talk about modern as well as classic pieces or artists with anyone who shows an interest in the subject. Much to his dismay, his actual talent as an artist has never been the best, and it certainly hasn't gotten any better with the years.

### Dramatic Theme: Repentance.

Captain Stone deeply regrets the atrocities he committed in the name of the UEF and believes that even though he contributed to the suffering of a generation at the hands of tyrants, he can still help create a better tomorrow... and will give his life if necessary to do so.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	3	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
3	5	5

**Skills:** Academics +2, Combat +3

Craftsmanship +1, Diplomacy +2, Machinery +2

**Traits:** Outside the Box, Practice Makes Perfect, Expert Driver (GP-11 Wyld Stallion Fighter)

Facility (Landship)n, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Retroactively Prepared, Mind over Matter, Strength in Union

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	13	6	0	0

### Area Capacity

Bridge 10/10	Antenna 6/10	Hull 9/20	Turrets 4/10	Stern 7/10	Enhancements 4
Curtain Fire	Support Fire	Heavy Railgun	Vulcans	Maglev	Threshold 3
Bullseye	Expert Enabler	Greater Bazooka	Beam Cannon	Reaction Bomb	Maglev 1
Frenzy					

## USLS-01 Landship Williams

The RUF's base of operations while out in the field are their landships. Way too large and slow to be of any real use during the guerrilla's hit and run operations, they serve a much better purpose defensively as veritable mountains full of guns - totaling around fifty emplacements and turrets - that hold the various defense lines leading to LA with a combination of terrain advantage and sheer firepower until reinforcements -usually the Wagner- arrive. Life inside Landships is a lot more complicated than in the Wagner. They do not have fancy supercomputers to always make the right choices for them or mysterious helpers made of money they can turn to for supplies when winter lasts too long, instead they must resort to what guerillas have been doing for centuries in the fight against those bigger and meaner than them: Stealing from their enemy. This is difficult, but doable, and the majority of RUF Platoon Captains have taken to the costume of always having more than they think they will need, because when they do need it, it usually isn't enough.

### The Alien Mindset

Several of the Enemies presented here only have rules for their use during Operations, this is either because they are either giant monsters or A.I. Controlled and will rarely have need for detailed Intermission mechanics.

If you think you could ever need them, you might as well come up with a few numbers for their Defenses, Modifiers and Plot Armor in advance instead of calculating everything. Anything they are supposed to be moderately good at should have at least a +5 Modifier – such as an aquatic Outsider to swimming Tests. Defenses should be of at least 15, and the Layers of Plot Armor can have their values of around 10 or so.

As for roleplaying them, remember they are supposed to be a mystery wrapped in an enigma. Give them a Theme for a semblance of personality, but keep them vast and inscrutable.

## Sample Enemy Mooks

### Morte K7

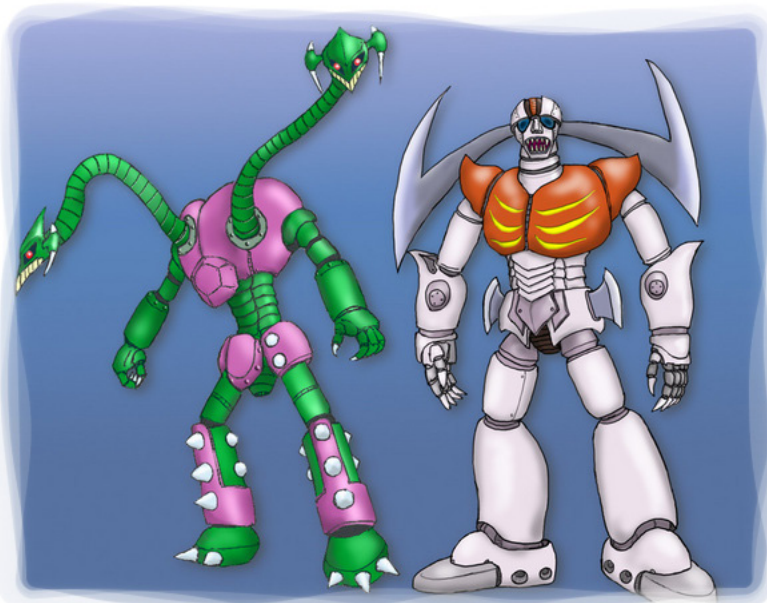
An enormous slumbering goliath of a humanoid robot, the Morte resembles a giant skeleton armed with two kamas or small scythes and is surprisingly durable given its gaunt build. Morte Botakuris usually take point and soak the majority of punishment meant for their allies, its bizarre mechanical composition a mixture of Earth and Outsider technology that greatly reduces the effects of beam weapons.

#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	4	2	0	0

#### Area Capacity

Core 10/10	Head 3/10	Torso 7/15	Arms 10/15	Legs 0/10
Shield of the Meek	Sacrifice	Beam Canceller	CQC	
			Long Rifle	
			Jackhammer Stake	



### Gemini M2

This double headed reptilian mechanoid serves as the artillery of Botakuri forces, and its hands were replaced with weapons to suit this purpose better. Though their AI is anything but intelligent, and certainly they appear to act like lazy slob at times, given enough time to 'wake up' during battle they will demonstrate fearsome ferocity, shooting eyebeams all over the place.

#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	2	4	0	0

#### Area Capacity

Core 20/20	Head 3/10	Torso 7/10	Arms 7/10	Legs 0/10
Bullseye	Beam Cannon	Beam Canceller	Light Machinegun	
Frenzy			Missile Pod	
Foresight				
Invincible				



## Dominion

Even if the real power of the UEF's forces reside in the GAF, the sheer numbers of mechanized land forces in their control from ages past - now unmanned and A.I. controlled - make up the bulk of their forces, and more of them continue to be produced since they only require a few human supervisors each. Dominion Units are mainly support Units with heavy artillery to make up for their lackluster defenses as armored vehicles when compared to Gears.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	3	3	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 13/15	Front 2/10	Top 5/15	Sides 5/10	Back 5/10
Sharpshooter	Armor Breaker	Heavy Machinegun	Long Rifle	Jammer
Support Fire				

## Majesty

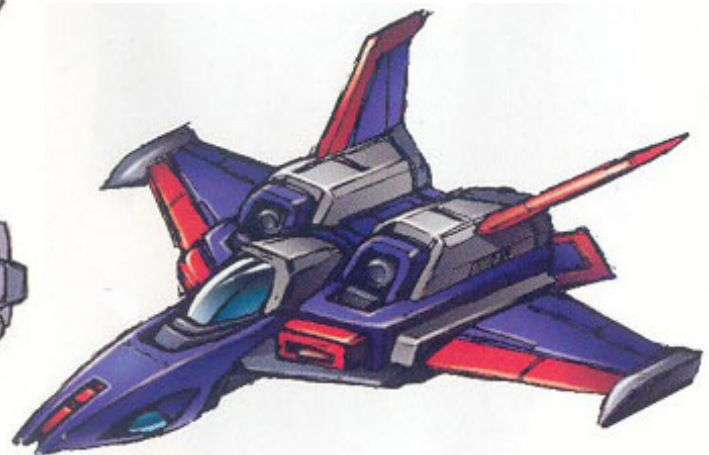
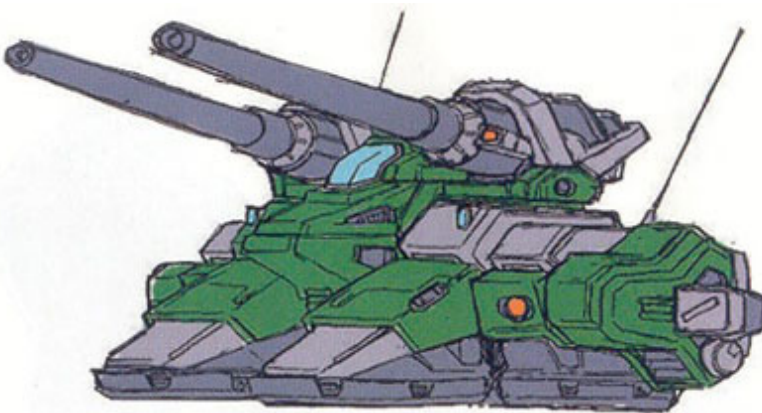
Part fighter jets, part bombers, all stealth. These Board-operated aircraft are just as numerous as their landbound version - if not more. Air capability coupled with their speed and sheer firepower make the UEF's air dominance a terrifying thing, requiring extensive effort to appropriately counter.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
12	4	1	5	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 15/15	Front 3/10	Torso 7/10	Wings 5/15	Back 0/10
Dogfighter	Split Missiles	ECS	Micro Missiles	
Booster				



## Sample Enemy Elites

### Draconis D65

The latest Botakuri models that the Outsiders have been rolling are bizarre biological monstrosities and not actually mechanical, like if it they were taken out of Japanese films made a whole century ago. The Draconis is one such homemade giant monster, resembling a cross between a giant octopus and a medusa, it has been engineered with some of Hiryu's most prized technologies such as the Gravagne Field and the anti-Gygravagnite Air Rods, a rather worrisome development to the eyes of the SDF's science team.

#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	8	8	0	0

#### Area Capacity

Core 3/15	Head 3/10	Torso 15/15	Tentacles 6/10	Bottom 3/10
The Beast	Scattering Beam	Gravagne Field	Extending Punch	Anti-Gravity
		Air Rods	Ensnaing Wires	
			CQC	

### GAR-06 Bravery

The first Gear to be mass produced by the UEF and the one that other Gears owe the nickname to, the Bravery is an agile Gear designed with the idea that the best way to survive against the SSA's Boards and men was to never let them hit their own in the first place, and it is equipped with a multitude of systems to this end in addition to excellent mobility.

After several years additional equipment has been developed to make it less of a walking deathtrap when compared to the RUF's own Gears, with increased energy capacity and endurance in each of its limbs. It also sports weapons for short to long distance encounters and is equally able to shine in any of them as the Gear of choice in the GAF's roster.



#### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
12	4	6	10	0	0

#### Area Capacity

Core 10/15	Head 1/10	Torso 5/10	Arms 4/15	Legs 0/10
Challenger	Vulcans	Micro Missiles	Beam Saber	
Jammer			Beam Rifle	
Blocking				
Invincible				



## Battleship

Contrary to popular belief, the age of battleships is not yet over. Armed to the teeth, reinforced to endure the worst that most can throw at them, and with the advantage of being able to last for months in the (relative) safety of the sea, the UEF's fleets are as strong as ever, with the addition of Gear carriers only making them even more fearsome.

More importantly, many of the guerilla's home grounds are close to the sea, rendering the threat of the flotilla an ever-present one.

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	10	6	0	0

### Area Capacity

Bridge 8/10	Antenna 6/10	Hull 6/20	Turrets 6/10	Stern 4/10
Battlefield Commander	Jury-Rig	Heavy Machinegun	Missile Pod	Marine Module
Jammer	Resupply		Beam Rifle	Linear Missile



Sample Enemy Rivals

Tate Kennedy

Tate Kennedy does not actually have nearly as much formal military training as even the rank and file of UEF actors, though this is not for a lack of attempts on the part of his wingmen to drill him properly. He prefers to simply use his own wildly chaotic and improvised tactics to devastating effect, essentially ignoring the broader strategy.

Tate was once a high school student in Boston, and witnessed the only time the rebellion has successfully infiltrated Gears into the interior of the city. Observing their attack on a prototype Gear shipment as part of a plan to destroy the convoy when it was least protected, inside the fortress walls, he climbed into the cockpit and successfully activated and intuited the PsAICon controls, rapidly defeating the hardly unskilled rebel operatives in a show of savagery.

It was later discovered that Tate had a hobbyist level of interest in historical wars up to and including those of the present era, and examined their data in great detail, from which he took his ruthlessly effective combat tactics. Further, he had a level of natural skill in Gear operation that was unseen previously. He begged to be allowed to stay on as the pilot of the Gear he salvaged, and the UEF acquiesced, if primarily out of a curiosity as to how his abilities were possible. Since then his addiction to combat and war has intensified greatly with exposure, and a great deal of the boy has been buried beneath the violent tendencies of the man.

Now a shell of a person that lives for battle, he should not be expected to show any mercy or attempt at negotiation with enemies save to taunt them, but it's quite possible that if he were forced to listen somehow he could be reasoned with. After all, he only wants to fight his battle, and his urges have consumed him to the point that he might be convinced to change sides if there was something in it for him

Dramatic Theme: Adrenaline.

Tate lives in order to get his high from war. Unlike certain other war obsessed characters he's not willing to actually sacrifice himself in the name of achieving war since it's only his ability to continue experiencing it that matters, and as such he's highly unlikely to support a clearly lost cause. Unless the end can be prolonged indefinitely, in which case he will gladly lend his aid to drag out the conflict as long as possible.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	0	1
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
7	3	2

**Skills:** Athletics +2, Combat +3, Survival +1  
**Traits:** Always Changing, Like a Flash, Intimidating, Lucky, Martial Artist  
**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Determinator  
Unyielding Will, Back At You

WWG-001 Freedom

One of the largest Gears seen to date, the Freedom is impossibly agile for its size. Despite being the least organic looking of the Glory models, it is the one that most obviously contains a creature inside from the way it fights, as the beast within will eventually break loose and demonstrate its ferocity, overriding any kind of restraint or mercy the Actor might have for its enemies, and tearing enemies asunder while performing physics-defying acrobatics like the ninja it resembles.



Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	8	8	8	0	0

Area Capacity

Core 15/15	Head 1/10	Torso 10/15	Arms 4/10	Legs 0/10
Berserker	Vulgans	TRC	Great Weapon	
Supercharged				
Limiter Release				



## Rose Velvet

Rose is a graduate with honors from the Boston academy, a calm and collected specialist in covert operations and infiltration. Despite any airs of femme fatale that she might stereotypically exhibit, she doesn't dabble much in social activities nor is she one for displays of excessive emotion beyond stoically making fun of others for her own amusement.

One of the few lucky survivors that were present for the battle of New York, Rose lost all of her teammates back then as part of both the battle and the detonation of the 3G-Bomb. Since that day, Rose has been working earnestly to have enough influence so as to put a stop to such senseless sacrifices. However, this does not mean she is one for mercy; Rose understands that sacrifices are to be made as part of her race to the top, and will stop at nothing to see her true enemies - the Outsiders - defeated.

Well known for her talent to outlast and outperform virtually anyone in a duel, Rose is a particularly valuable Actress for the Glory squadron as they place great importance in the machines' gathering of live battle data and don't really look forward to them being destroyed by the Wagner before they can be perfected.

### Dramatic Theme: Ultimate Victory.

Rose firmly believes that the Outsiders are to be destroyed by whomever wins the war between humans, and fully intends to ascend through the ranks until she can rally enough force to do so. She agrees on principle with the guerilla but considers them misguided. Ultimately, she owes her loyalty to no one other than herself and she will turn coat if it suits her purposes best.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	4	0
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
2	3	2

**Skills:** Academics +2, Athletics +2, Dexterity +2, Stealth +2

**Traits:** Adaptable Mind, Stack the Odds

Jaded, Jack of all Trades, Genius

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Cool Under Pressure, Target Lock, Live Another Day

### WWG-002 Justice

Obviously created to seek and destroy the Wagner and its Gears, the Justice excels at single combat to take out individual Units and will quickly disable even the almighty airship if it is left alone with it. It sacrifices hardness for speed to this end, and is engineered for hit and run tactics for this reason.

It uses similar technology to the Hirameki, though the board that carries it is entirely biological in nature, and all too willing to initiate plan "ramming speed".



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

### Area Capacity

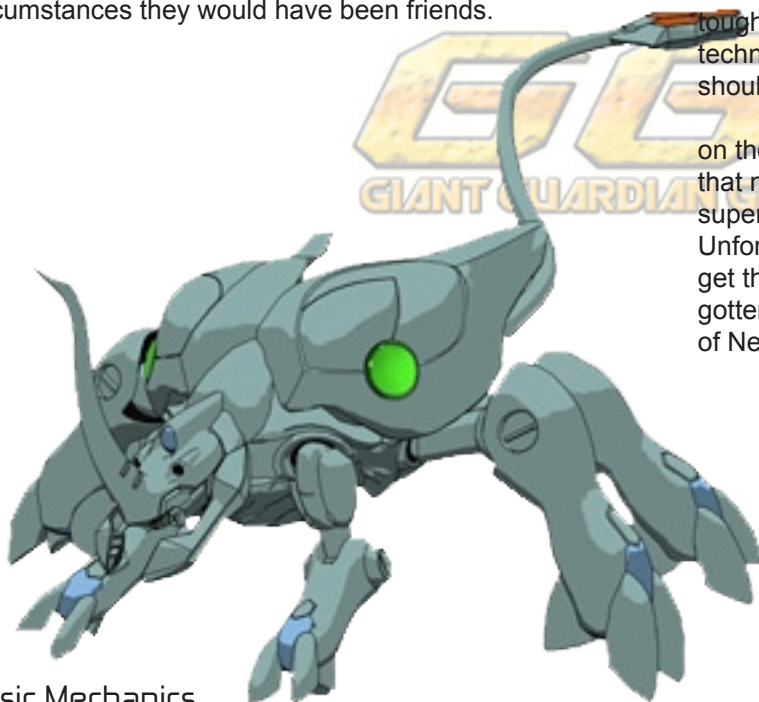
Core 20/20	Head 1/10	Torso 10	Arms 5/10	Legs 4/10
Organic Field	Vulcans		CQC	Anti-Gravity
Challenger			Great Weapon	Heavenly Wind
Elusive Target				

## Chuck Goodspeed

An experienced and effective team leader, Chuck Goodspeed is a man who could have chosen to live a (relatively) peaceful, simple life in Boston with his privileged family, but chose instead to serve the UEF. Not only is he a talented fighter and tactician, but he is oddly merciful for one in his position.

Despite always executing missions with all of the devotion his heart and soul can give, he never forgets that the enemy he fights is other humans, and has displayed a tendency to disable rather than kill when capable. His idealism for the 'Unified Government' of the UEF is usually looked at with disrespect from his very peers, and although he turns a blind eye to said remarks he is not too soft for his position. When the situation calls for it, such as when the lives of civilians or his team are in danger, his wrath is swift and devastating.

Due to his exemplary record, his combination of strength and compassion, and his overall polite and charming demeanor, it is no wonder that he commands such loyalty from his team and is loved by the GAF's PR division and he has been made leader of their Glory Squadron. It is commonly agreed even by his enemies that Goodspeed is, at heart, a good man. Even if they do see him as being on the wrong side - indeed, had they met under different circumstances they would have been friends.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

### Area Capacity

Bridge 3/10	Front 5/10	Center 14/15	Bottom 2/15	Legs 6/10
Moving Repository	Micro Missiles	Friction Field	Drill	Gallant Kick
Battlefield Commander		Heavy Railgun		

### Dramatic Theme: The Greater Good.

Chuck is convinced in what the UEF is doing. He does not like it, but he will not question if there are better ways either, and is convinced that the guerilla is only making it worse by fanning the flames of hatred and causing more losses for every side.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	1	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
3	4	7

**Skills:** Presence +1, Diplomacy +3, Combat +1

**Traits:** Outside the Box, Devoted Comrade, Hard Work and Guts

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Patience of a Saint, Righteous Fury, Strength in Union

### UES-002 Providence

The mobile fortresses of the GAF are a sharp contrast to the Wagner's or even the William's elegance, resembling more giant arthropods than ships, but far more powerful than any of them. The Providence class are incredibly tough to bring down thanks to a combination of defensive technology and an almost unnatural alacrity that simply shouldn't be possible.

Indeed, rumor says the Providence are an Outsider on the inside - much like the Glory Units themselves - but that not a single one of them has a Captain or other acting superior. Who commands them, if anyone, is a mystery. Unfortunately for the guerilla who would very much like to get their hands on one of them, the closest they've ever gotten to toppling a Providence class was during the battle of New York, and we know how well that went.



## Eclair Rouge

As an up-and-coming Glory Actress, currently awaiting for the newest models to be rolled out, Eclair is unquestionably loyal to the cause of the UEF. She has gained a reputation already as a competitive, hotheaded, and bloody-minded fighter with a reactive fighting style. Eclair often taunts her opponents in open channels, then takes down any who dare come at her with vindictive ruthlessness.

A cursory glance to her background reveals that her hatred for the guerilla is not out of loyalty and propaganda, but a much more personal issue. As the daughter of Executive Councilwoman Ezalia Rouge, she didn't witness the worst of life in the Safe Zones until after becoming an orphan. To thank for her fate are the -then unnamed- insurgent forces that caused the very first violent riots in the first months since the creation of the Safe Zones.

They set fire to and destroyed multiple government buildings - complete with civilians inside, including Eclair's own family. As a gullible teenager, Eclair let her grief get the best of her. She signed up as part of the volunteer civilian peacekeeping forces almost immediately, and has only gotten crueler since.

Eclair is friendly, funny and even flirty in her own way most of the time, with a flair for dramatics. But it's even odds on if she'll have a crying fit or a psychotic break when things don't go her way, and she will take it out on anyone she could reasonably get away with mistreating at a moment's notice.

### Dramatic Theme: Vainglory.

Eclair is a rare combination of an encyclopedic knowledge of tactics, rules and regulations and impossibly resolute self-confidence in her skill, Eclair would make a great officer if only she wasn't so invested in seeing the RUF destroyed by her own hand. Anyone unlucky enough to force her to retreat will find out that Eclair is a long-time runner up for world's most sore loser.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
1	2	2
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
4	5	3

**Skills:** Academics +3, Combat +2, Diplomacy +3, Presence +2

**Traits:** Experienced Veteran, Practice Makes Perfect, Alluring, Criminal Mind

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Disarm, Martyr, Live Another Day, Almighty Champion.

### This Time, it's Personal

In fiction, Rivals are usually well developed and just as relevant as the main characters to the story, they are often even more popular than the protagonists and every time they trade swords it is guaranteed to be an exciting moment.

Trying to replicate this in a table is a noble goal but an RPG is fundamentally in that the PCs need to be on the center of the stage at all times. You cannot afford to constantly cut to what the NPCs are doing for the sake of their development, so what you need to do is to make them part of the PC's lives.

The simplest of methods is to have them and the PCs meet during an Intermission. Maybe the PCs get in trouble with Civil Protection and they are bailed out out of what looks to the NPC like another case of authorital abuse. Maybe they meet them on neutral terms like during a visit to the Sanctuary Districts, or perhaps even in the black market.

The point should be that they establish a relationship with each other, so that later you can pull the surprise twist that they're actually enemies and proceed to shout at each other like good rivals ought to do.



## SLF-027 Schrodinger and SLF-028 Wigner

One of the strangest reported Cryptid sightings lately around Verne I is that of a 'man with strange hair and a glowing woman', they are both obviously Cryptid in origin (or at least alien enough to share many of their features) and heavy readings of Element G are detected in places where they are said to appear.

The only pattern to their appearances so far is that they tend to observe Operations to subdue or destroy other Cryptids from a distance, but they have only been confronted once by Children and the results were... not very promising. Despite their small size, both are extremely powerful and operatives are not to engage them outside of a Gear in all circumstances.

Both share the ability to fire miniature parasitic creatures from their mouths similar in composition to Gygravagnite that cause the mineral to replicate faster, only to explode into a fine mist that the Cryptids then absorb – with harmful psychological consequences for anyone in the vicinity of the explosion. In addition to that common weapon, they are demonstrated levels of teamwork unseen in earlier Cryptids, and complement each other with their individual unique characteristics.

Schrodinger (the man) manipulates sound, while Wigner (the woman) holds domain over electromagnetic radiation. Both may use these abilities to various effects, and the full extent of their control over either element is unknown, but their elusiveness leads the Foundation to believe they use them for illusory purposes, usually due to conflictive readings indicating they are in multiple places at the same time.

Schrodinger and Wigner are a duo obviously meant as returning enemies, with their presence as potential personal-scale encounters rendering them viable even into the late game. Schrodinger wants to remain as the main attacker, while Wigner should get additional abilities to support and protect Schrodinger. You may also want to consider giving them Synchro Weapons or even the ability to Combine.

### **Dramatic Theme: Creepy Stalkers.**

For now Schrodinger and Wigner seem content enough to hang by the sidelines and observe Operations, but they are a very present threat and there is no telling when they might decide to take matters into their own hands. If they are not dealt with soon, Clarke Actors may find themselves paid a visit one of these nights.







Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	5	3
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
11	7	9

**Skills:** Athletics +1, Combat +2, Phantasm +3 (Sounds)

**Traits:** Escalating Threat. Anticlimactic, Flight

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Determinator, Where'd he Go?, Live Another Day

### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	6	7	9	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 5/20	Head 9/10	Torso 10/10	Arms 3/10	Legs 3/10
One-Of-Many	Resonance Cannon	Friction Field	Light Machinegun	Anti-Gravity
Limiter Release	Parasite			

GIANT GUARDIA

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
3	4	5
Grit	Drive	Wisdom
7	9	11

**Skills:** Stealth +1, Electronics +2, Phantasm +3 (Visual)

**Traits:** Escalating Threat. Anticlimactic, Flight

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Brutality, Where'd he Go?, Live Another Day.



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	7	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 10/10	Head 5/10	Torso 7/15	Arms 4/15	Legs 4/10
Vanishing	Parasite	Beam Reflector	Ensnaring Wires	Anti-Gravity
Shield of the Meek			Armor Breaker	CQC

## Sample Enemy Bosses

### AIE-04 Angelus

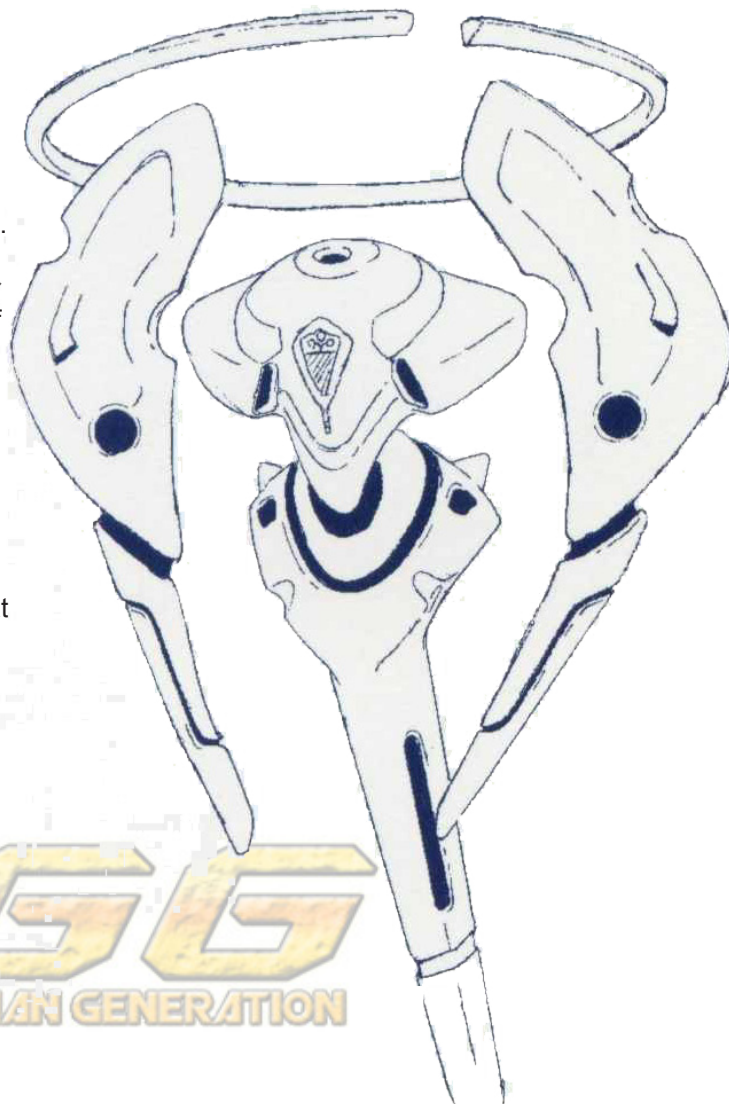
The only Outsider that has had multiple encounters with Hiryu's Gears and escaped every time until now, partly because of its power and resilience, partly because it prefers to fight in environments where it has the advantage. Despite its name, the Angelus looks anything but like a winged human, gaining its name from the halo circling over its figure, which can serve as a boorish projectile weapon if the need arises.

Angelus is a great standalone end boss for the first Arc or a midgame encounter, and will put everyone on the ropes if accompanied with Botakuris. The Outsider flies over water or other environments that make it difficult to access and complicates matters greatly for anyone unprepared. It will pull back if pressed into a corner, but its impressive defenses and accurate weaponry could force a party that is too confident for its own good to make a retreat instead.

If you really want to drive home how bothersome he can be as a recurring encounter, he can learn Live Another Day as one of his next Genre Powers, and thanks to Indomitable Colossus it will always have plenty of Genre to spare for such a purpose - the use of Counter Intelligence will put a stop to that, or otherwise you can stage a dramatic last stand at the end of an Arc as it is cornered and prefers to use another Power such as Rampage instead, maybe even revealing a secondary Form while at it.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Impregnable Defense, Rampage, You're Too Slow



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	16	10	5	0

### Area Capacity

Core 10/15	Head 1/10	Torso 10/20	Arms 3/10	Bottom 3/10	Enhancements 32
Internal Fortification	Heavenly Wind	Gravagne Field	CQC	Anti-Gravity	Energy 5
Indomitable Colossus		Vulcans	Dueling Blade		Threshold 5
					Accuracy 5
					Indomitable Colossus 5
					Anti-Gravity 1



## AIE-08 Sagittarius

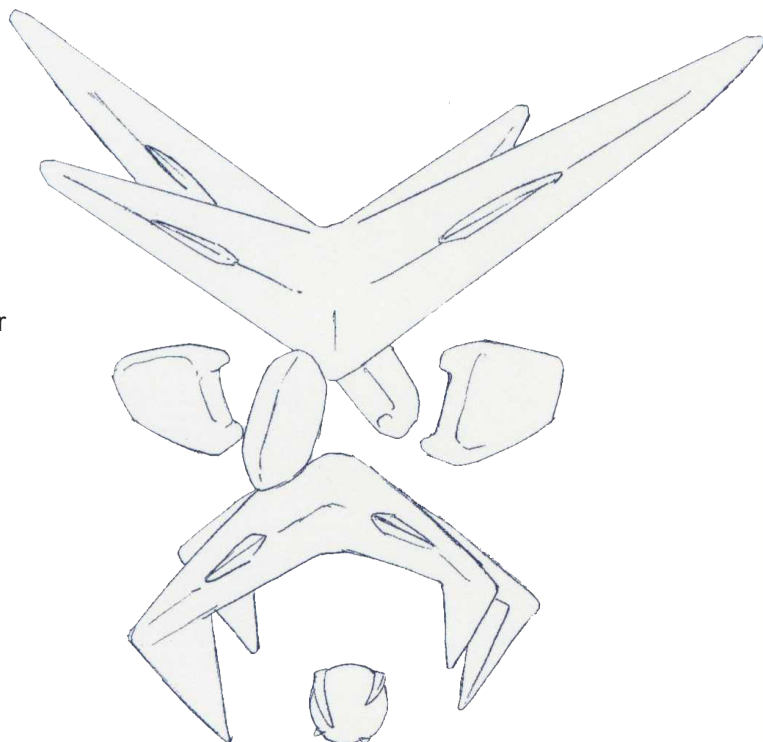
Sagittarius is a floating multitude of shifting Gygravagnite crystals capable of high-yield energy attacks, rotating around a Core at the bottom of the creature. It is a rather conservative and even intelligent Outsider, unwilling to expose itself to danger and often found bombarding from a distance until either its Botakuri minions have broken past Mitsurugi's defenses or been wiped out - at which point it retreats.

Sagittarius is no joke, and is a mid-game encounter at earliest considering how effective a sniper it is. It will be difficult to catch up to it unharmed - to say the least - if you make use of terrain effectively it would not be surprising for it to survive until the late game, a point at which it may be outclassed and sidelined by greater threats.

For further enhancements to Sagittarius, consider simply increasing its resilience further with Common Enhancements, and possibly enhancing Foresight and Invincible as well.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Called Shot, Rampage, One in a Million Shot



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
4	12	9	10	5	5

### Area Capacity

Core 10/10	Top 10/10	Center 6/15	Exterior 6/15	Bottom 3/10	Enhancements 25
Learning Computer	Foresight	Scattering Beam	Beam Rifle	Resupply	Energy 3
G-Buster	Invincible	Beam Cannon	Lux Cannon		Accuracy 5
					Penetration 5
					Resupply 2

### New Enemies

The presented enemies are obviously only a few of the many you will likely need if you want to run a long-lasting game, of which Eclair is notable for not even having a Gear of her own yet.

Following are a few suggestions for other enemies that the rival factions would bring out.

#### Outsiders

**Serpent:** A snakelike mass of jagged edges coiling together in a wormlike shape, it is a melee specialist and aquatic combat expert, capable of withstanding extreme depth pressures.

**Legion:** A literal factory of Botakuri, not too strong on its own, but surrounded by dozens of the things and churning more out at an unsettling rate.

#### Glories

**Democracy:** A flying faceless Gear, armed with a conductor bar to channel its forcefield into powerful melee and ranged attacks.

**Republic:** A spider-like weapons platform much like the Penderecki, but smaller in size and faster of movement.

#### Cryptids

**Alice:** A cyberspace Cryptid that feeds on electronic data, disrupting Verne's economic center and using its own military to defend the host computer.

**Bob:** Sprung from the remains of Alice, Bob is a fusion of discarded and destroyed Verne Gears into a frail but extremely dangerous form that packs the yield of a 3G-Bomb within itself.

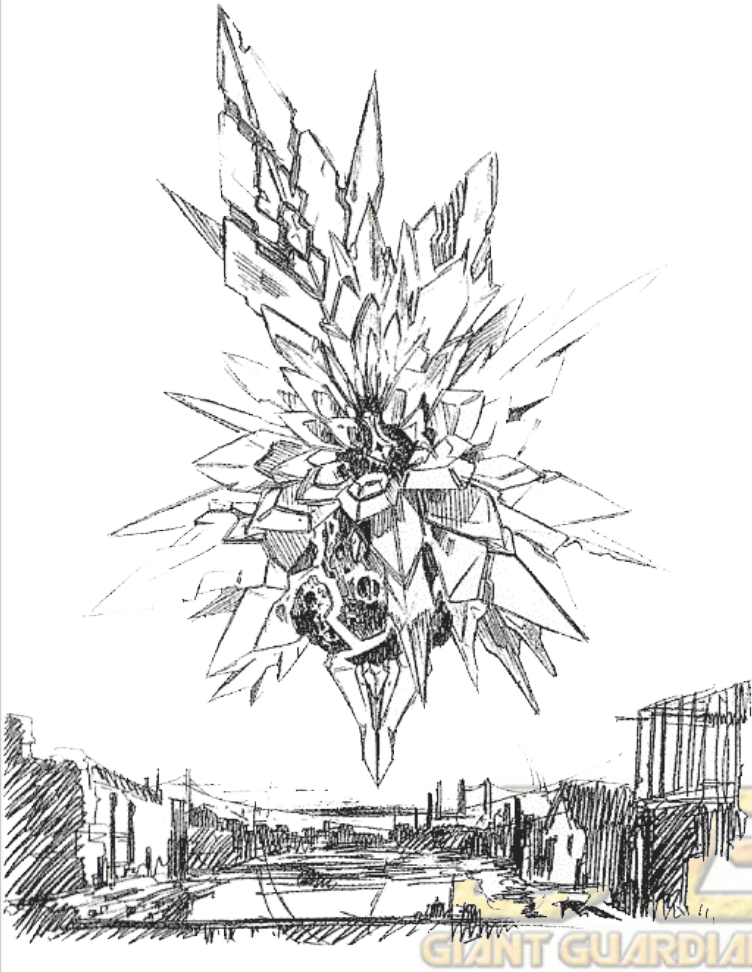
## AIE-01 Custos

The first Outsider seen outside of their Mothership and by far the most powerful one ever recorded, the Custos never wanders too far away of Easter II and attacks anything remotely dangerous that comes within a few hundred kilometers of the island with extreme prejudice. Described since the first days of the invasion as a "Crystal-ridden UFO" hardly any new information has been gathered on it since then, due to the danger doing so presumes. Many have perished to its extreme bursts of Element G radiation, close in power to a 3G-Bomb.

The Custos is, for obvious reasons, a late-game encounter or even an end boss not only because of its importance as the guardian of the Outsider mothership - as the name suggests - but also because of its tremendous power. It is recommended that you give your players ample information on their enemy before they engage it or that you split it into a two-parter battle as they will very likely have to retreat should they face it unprepared.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Undying, Almighty Champion, Twin Strike



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
13	13	18	13	5	5

### Area Capacity

Core 15/15	Head 6/10	Torso 6/15	Arms 3/10	Legs 5/10	Enhancements 60
Experimental G-Furnace	Reaction Bomb	Giga Blaster	Rocket Punch	Micro Missiles	Evasion 5
Indomitable Colossus					Armor 5
Limiter Release					Threshold 5
					Energy 5
					Accuracy 5
					Penetration 5
					Indomitable Colossus 5
					Limiter Release 1



## SLF-014 Maxwell

First spotted in the trash incinerators of an inter-colony merchant shuttle from which it escaped into space, Maxwell is an ever-growing pile of scrap metal, Gygravagnite constantly combusting and regrowing, and all sorts of strange elements found only in the remnants of the Asimov colonies.

Maxwell has survived for nearly a decade not for lack of trying from the Clarke Foundation. It has proven simply too difficult to kill, and it comes out of every encounter stronger than before. Maxwell's distinguishing feature is how it can assimilate any weapon that previously failed to kill it, becoming virtually immune to them.

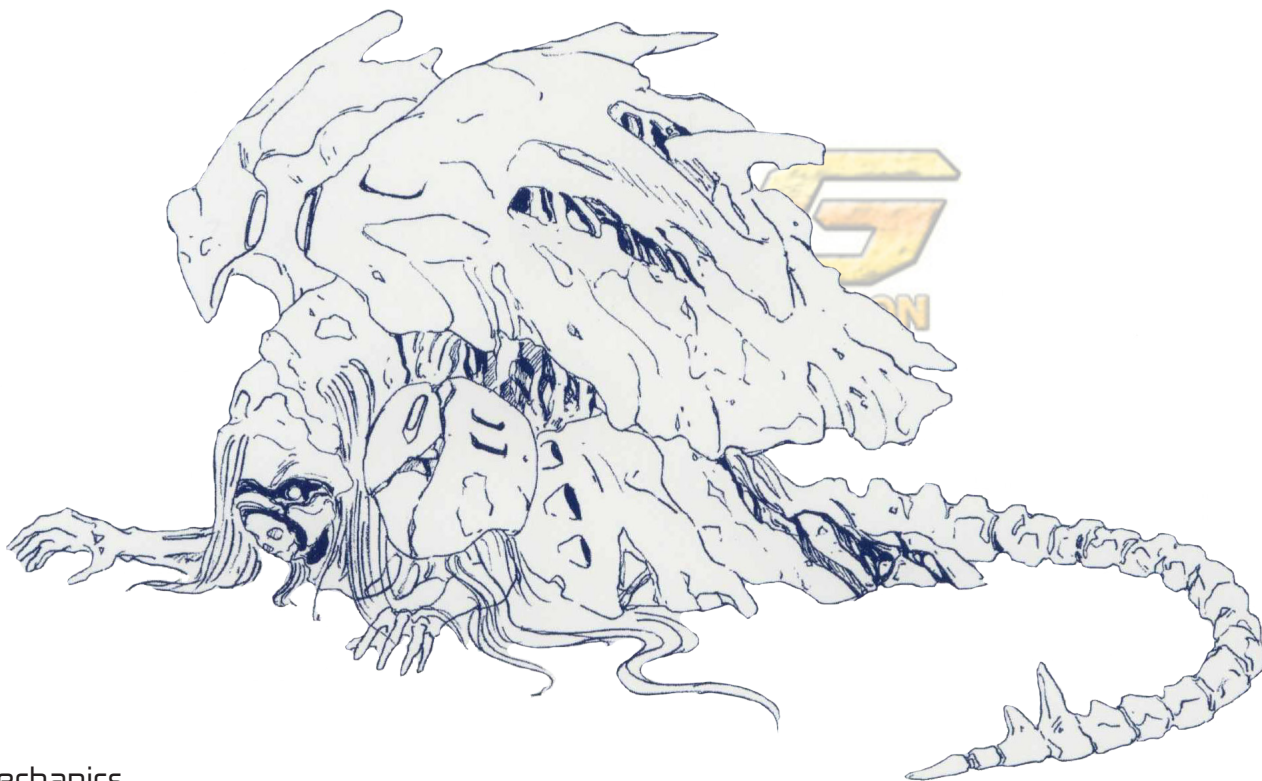
To add further worries, it is capable of physically assimilating other Gears, turning its strange form of biology into a material that absorbs the Gear's own body and places extreme harm on anyone who happens to be synchronizing itself with it. An ability that the science team would love to analyze, but can't quite afford to attempt to, with the added caveat that if they surrender an opportunity to destroy Maxwell they might not get another one again.

Maxwell is a mid-game enemy. Since he is meant to be encountered solo (like most Cryptids), he is dangerous without being impossible. Maxwell never retreats from battle, but never gives chase to any Actors trying to flee either, and thus can safely be encountered two or more times until his guard is finally broken through.

If Maxwell were to evolve further, it most likely would cover its defensive bases next, by getting the full suite of defensive Common Enhancements first and foremost, with Genre Powers and Upgrades that increase its staying power and disrupt enemy offense also being logical - good options include Impetuous Style, Impregnable Defenses, and Weapons packing Conditions.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Determinator, Undying, Almighty Champion



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
2	14	10	6	5	5

### Area Capacity

Core 5/10	Head 10/10	Torso 10/30	Arms 8/10	Legs 2/10	Enhancements 25
Stuff of Nightmares	Bullseye	Damage Sponge	Merge	Drill	Accuracy 5
Limiter Release	Frenzy		Extending Punch		Penetration 5
					Limiter Release 1

## SLF-016 Laplace

The Cryptid known as Laplace is an amalgamation of corpses from a variety of lifeforms as extensive as their states of decomposition in a vaguely female form. Its entire body is a walking munitions factory, and it can expel parts of itself like deadly hailstorms. It bounces or simply hovers around the battlefield, with remarkably agility for its bulk, like a demented balloon of dead people.

Laplace has several years' worth of experience outsmarting and outlasting attempts to subdue or eliminate it. It is believed it might have a very strong telepathic and precognitive talents. Laplace can be a recurring mid-to-late game Boss, though it is unlikely to hold up well by then, being extremely single minded in its strategy, and could definitely use some way to regain the Energy it so voraciously consumes.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Where'd he Go?, You're Too Slow, Live Another Day



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
17	9	11	15	0	0

### Area Capacity

Core 10/15	Head 10/10	Torso 1/10	Arms 3/15	Legs 1/10	Enhancements 35
Probability Shell	Mindscan	Vulcans	Light Machinegun	CQC	Evasion 5
All Become One	Foresight				Armor 5
					Threshold 5
					Energy 5
					All Become One 5
					Foresight 1



## SLF-005 Gravagne

Pure Gygravagnite in the form of a humanoid; that is the only definition everyone has had of the Spontaneous LifeForm 005 Gravagne for decades and and that is all anyone actually knows about it. The Gravagne is only spotted occasionally once every several years, and every time it is stronger than before, annihilating everything in the vicinity and absorbing all the Element G into itself before disappearing once again.

What it does in between raids, its final objective, and even its true origin are unknown. Gravagne displays incredible capabilities in distorting spacetime around itself and is theorized to be proof of string theory. Strangely enough, during recent appearances it has been featuring a multitude of equipment that seems taken straight out of humanity's arsenal, with a penchant for both melee combat and large explosions.

Further complicating the issue of neutralizing it is the fact it is often surrounded by minions - strangely enough, they are usually replicas of other preexisting Cryptids.

Choice Powers for Gravagne include Disturbing Presence, Undying, Love and Courage, Twin Strike and Rampage. A good Upgrade for it would be to give it a Component with Limiter Release or Gygravagnite Charge, given how much Energy it guzzles, and Cooperate would synergize well with its high Tension. Additional finisher attacks (specially those that attack multiple enemies such as Heavy Machinegun and Reaction Weapon) might also be a good investment.

**Traits:** Escalating Threat, Anticlimactic

**Genre Powers:** Try Again, Mid-Scene Upgrade, Not so Fast, Determinator, Pure Pressure, Almighty Champion



### Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
7	19	15	11	5	5

### Area Capacity

Core 10/10	Head 9/10	Torso 16/20	Arms 10/10	Legs 7/10	Enhancements 71	Enhancements (Continued)
Internal G-Field	Lux Cannon	TRC	Great Weapon	Gallant Kick	Evasion 5	Implacable 1
Implacable	Aggressor	Possession	Resupply	Maglev	Armor 5	Aggressor 1
			Scrap Offering		Threshold 5	TRC 1
					Energy 5	Resupply 2
					Accuracy 5	Scrap Offering 2
					Penetration 5	Maglev 1

## Do it Yourself

The thing that distinguishes Roleplaying Games from most other forms of entertainment is that you can customize them to your liking, and there is no limit other than your imagination.

GGG as a rules system is flexible and effect-based, encouraging Players and the GM to toy around with the descriptions of events. That is not the only reason most rules in the game stand up on their own, though, another important reason is so that you can take these rules and make up your own setting for your games, with its own unique flavor, without having to spend entire afternoons reworking the rules to make them fit.

Anything you don't like from the few dozen pages this book dedicates to its world? Throw it away and replace it with something you like, or make your own from scratch.

This means figuring out what the world is like, who the PCs will fight against, where they will live, and who they know. Sounds intimidating, doesn't it? GMs all over the world have been doing this on their own for time immemorial, but the more that the Players have a say in this world and its inhabitants, the more they will like playing in it and interacting with them.

That said, many GMs are picky about the kind of games they want to run, and that is fine. This first section, then, is for GMs that either want some guidance or want to make the players invest a little more in the setting, those that want to create everything on their own or don't want a set plot or tone are free to skip parts or the entirety of this section as they see fit.

Think of shows you like and would like to emulate as a group. Make note of the things everyone likes the most about them. What does everyone want from the game? What does everyone not want? What things are they interested in? What are they curious about or otherwise willing to try?

Everyone needs to be on the same page as much as possible regarding what the Series will be like. It would not do any good if every player goes in with different expectations, and if people do expect opposite things from the game then this should be settled before going any further.

Once everyone has come to terms, you can start to define the world.

## Ambience and Tone

The Mecha Genre offers a wide variety of settings to play in, from high technology games where impossibly sized giant robots must protect the Earth sphere from an intergalactic alien empire to grim and dark dystopic societies in which people hunt each other with powered armor for money.

If you're going to create a Series then you should decide where it stands within this spectrum. What is the world like? What is the technological level? Are mecha a common occurrence? Has humanity conquered the stars? Are there known alien races? How do the people live in this day and age?

### Epic, Gritty or Marvelous?

**Epic Settings** are where the impossible is common happenstance: perhaps technology has advanced enough to be indistinguishable from magic, or science is rendered irrelevant by some greater force of the universe.

Epic Episodes involve stories that can put the entirety of the world, the galaxy or reality itself at risk with only the PCs to protect it. In an Epic game of GGG, you will generally see weapons adapted to more outlandish interpretations: an energy weapon is the size of the moon (or is the moon) and a heavy railgun instead creates miniature black holes.

**Gritty Settings** try not to suspend disbelief beyond the minimum necessary and technology is usually down to earth and the existence of humanoid giant robots is somewhat justified. Games are usually about small conflicts such as playing antiterrorist response teams or trying to survive the front lines during a war.

Playing a Gritty game might see many character options restricted for the sake of integrity, such as forbidding biological or animal themed mecha along with limitations on interpreting upgrades to a mecha to more realistic equivalents.

**Marvelous Settings** are the majority and placed somewhere in between the previous two. They have a semblance of realism to them but maintain elements that we are far away from seeing in our own lives. Mecha are either rare and unique or the main characters and their antagonists are the only ones with the rare ability to go beyond existing Mecha technology.

Conventions of both genres are present, and plots range from giant robot world wars where the PCs are a special unit to private organizations investigating strange events and using their Mecha to solve them. The default setting of GGG is one such example.



## Heroic, Tragic or Bittersweet?

**Heroic Settings** have humanity (or whatever society you are using) as fundamentally good. People may be flawed but they always try their best. Villainous characters tend to have sympathetic reasons for their acts or are simply not human and easily branded as 'evil.'

Characters die in grandiose acts of self-sacrifice or at least get a chance for a really good one-liner before going out. Death can usually be put off until the end of the episode and oftentimes is just an excuse for the character to show up again later as a cyborg or another twist like that.

**Tragic Settings** are full of damaged, messed up individuals who are either out to get you or self-destructive and generally defined by their faults as people. Recurring antagonists may be completely irredeemable monsters in personality or may simply have a personal problem with the PCs.

Survival is never guaranteed and every battle might be any PC's last, with fates worse than death not being that uncommon. These tend to skip on Mooks and sometimes even Elites as enemies.

**Bittersweet Settings** are in the grayer morality zone and populated with people who are overall good but sometimes make mistakes, or are too busy protecting their own to worry about others. Enemies range from characters the PCs would be friends with, if they weren't in opposing teams, to the occasional well intentioned but ultimately reckless extremist.

Death is not necessarily common, but it happens to the best, and it is not pretty. Since in the default setting of GGG the world is largely populated by a balanced amount of jerks and morons, it fits as an example of this.



## Enemy Mine

The primary enemy faction and their objective will define the conflict that unites your party in opposition and cause. If you want to have more than one enemy faction (as in the default setting), then considering how they interact with each other is just as important as how they interact with the players.

Who or what are they? What are they after? Are they sympathetic? Do they oppose the pilots personally or are they just in the way of the grander objective? How do the pilots feel about them? How large a threat do they pose? Would it be possible to make peace with them?

Your enemies and the threat they represent to the PCs will carry the previously defined tone more than any other aspect of the setting, so make sure they are well defined to reflect it.

## Sandboxing

PCs don't just jump from one Operation to the next. They have lives too. This is where your Base comes into play, as it is where most Intermissions will take place. Whether you are running in the style of episodic or serial shows, you are going to have to set an interesting Base for the PCs to live in which motivates them to do things.

While the initial Scene of an Episode is usually a good kickstarter to get people moving, you also need the rest of the setting to change and react organically to keep things interesting.

In other words, you need your Base to be akin to a Sandbox for them to play with. They can do anything they want as long as they stay within the bounds you've set but they have to share it with other kids who are playing their own games in there and they don't want to knock down another's sand castles by mistake.

## Episode Zero

Since the group is playing an ensemble cast in which everyone is already acquainted with their Mecha, you miss out on the whole fun of falling into the cockpit and other related genre conventions. However, you can run mini-sessions for each which explore their past before the start. The benefits of this are three: players get the chance to give a test run to their PCs before the actual game begins so they can change the Concept, Themes, and other, harder mechanics before it is too late, as well as be introduced in character to their Base of operations and, finally, lets you and the Player become comfortable with the rules of the game for both Intermissions and Operations.

## People and Places

You will have to come up with People and Places to fill your Base with. These will help drive various Subplots and Themes and provide both a cast of support characters and reusable scenarios for your scenes. They will also carry the torch in helping set the ambience that you've previously decided.

Set pieces are nice scenery but not much use without anyone to populate them, so it is recommended to start with People rather than Places since the former's specific qualities are often far more important than those of the latter; having the most advanced Mecha factory in the world is radically different depending on whether the one in charge is a madman trying to take over the world or an organization that wants to help humanity reach the stars.

**People** are the supporting cast of NPCs. They have Attributes, Skills and Traits like any other PC according to their tiers, and they only have one Theme by default. Whatever you do with their Themes, make sure they involve the PCs in some fashion: they are the main stars, after all.

**Places** are even less prominent than People, but they're still extremely important, as they will be the literal stages for a great deal of the action in your game and let you decorate a scene with material that encourages character development without having any NPCs take part.

Now, you aren't going to be noting down every possible location the PCs could randomly wander into, that would be not only tiresome but also silly. What you want to do is create a few points of interest players can use during the game for specific purposes. If done right an HQ's Places help build a sense of familiarity, along with a sense of progression as they change over time.

All a Place needs is a quick description, but if you want it to stick you'll likely want to figure out if it provides any Advantages and Disadvantages.

### GMPCs

Sometimes you want to make a character that will accompany the PCs in their adventures. That is fine by itself, though it adds another layer of management to the game and isn't really as fun as it sounds. NPCs that act like they were PCs are called GMPCs and are needed to be handled with extreme care.

There is a reason why they're being mentioned as an optional sidebar rule in a chapter that is already optional, and that is the tendency GMPCs have to be the only ones allowed to be important in the game, with everyone else serving as lackeys at best.

GMPCs can be done right, but when that is the case they are there to support or oppose the PCs. They are plot devices at best that enable the PCs to actually impact the story. If you're not confident that you can use a GMPC properly, don't use one.

## NPC Themes

Of course nothing says you can't give NPCs more than a single Theme. It just means they'll have to interact more with the characters so they all leave their mark, and a NPC that has differing themes for every member of the party can fuel a great relationship web.

That said since NPC Themes involve the PCs, they blur the lines between the usual three kinds making the distinction between them rather pointless. Don't feel forced to represent all categories if you do give them multiple Themes.

Support NPCs don't, by default, pilot Mecha of their own so unless you want to have a recurring NPC Ally or enemy be someone they interact with regularly during Intermissions, there is no need for them to even have Genre Points, making hard rules for their Themes something needless.

## Character Focus

The good thing about ensemble casts is that everyone shares protagonism. That said, sometimes you want specific PCs to have a chance to shine. Maybe they haven't been able to do much due to bad rolls or their ideas just don't go well or they are left out of whatever it is the rest like doing, whatever the reason is, these PCs are just begging to have a Character Centric Episode for them.

In such Episodes, the very first Scene is not initiated by the GM but by the owner of the PC in question and everyone else's requested Scenes must be somehow involved with the PC who is the focus of the Episode. Finally, this special attention gives them a bonus Advantage to each and every single Test performed by them for its duration. For today, they are the star.





## Mini Episodes

Another way to entertain players who haven't done much is to run a solo Episode for them much in the style of an introduction Episode. This is different from a Character Centric Episode in that this special interlude doesn't have to include other PCs – though other players certainly can participate if they want to.

There won't be any Operations - or at least they're not recommended. The session can take place during a timeskip between Arcs so as to not interfere with the main storyline and can help to flesh out a character that hasn't seen much development yet. Of course nothing stops you from making this Mini Episode critical to the plot but players that weren't present may resent you doing so.

If you want to give that specific PC a power boost, then a Mini Episode is a great chance to do so – simply give them a possibility to roleplay their Themes and they will come out of it with one or two Genre Points for it.



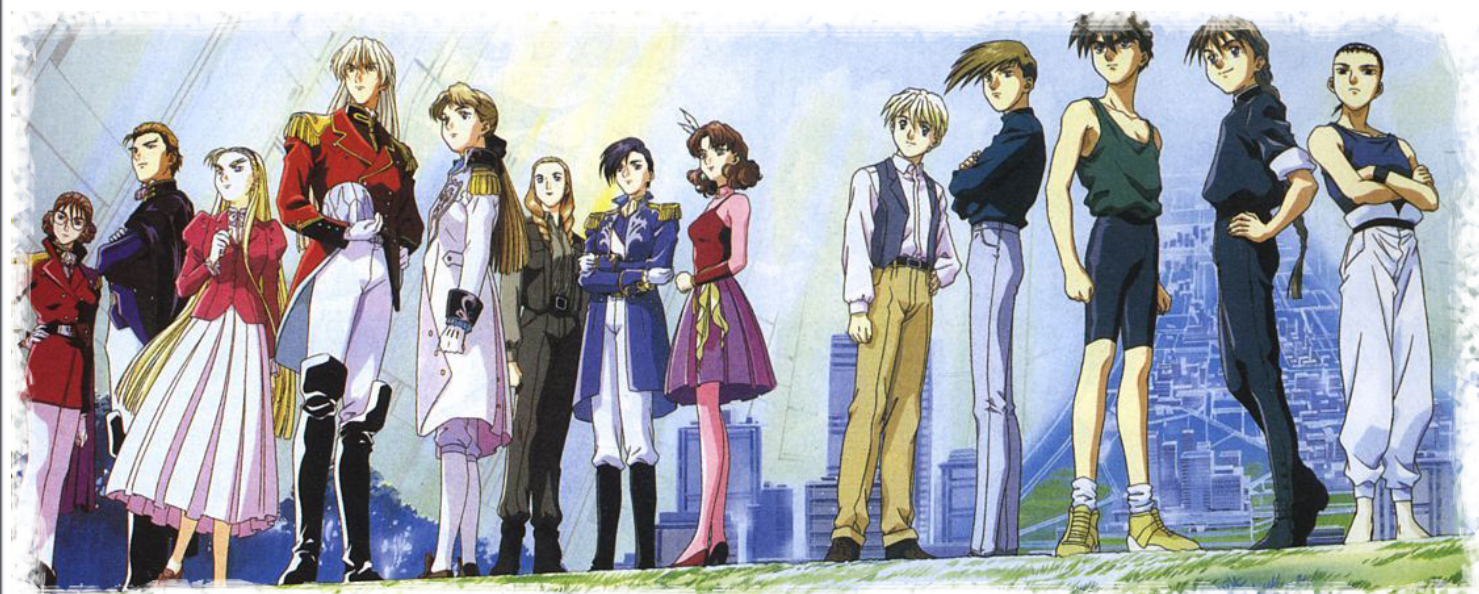
## I Built That

The existing variety of Upgrades should let you create nearly any kind of enemy, especially once you get the hang of re-skinning. Of course, no one is going to stop you from modifying the existing Upgrades or creating entirely new ones.

Feel free to come up with your own using the power levels of Aberrant abilities as inspiration – stronger, but not strictly better. Certainly once you start to flex your creative muscles you will find that you want your big bads to be able to do more than deal damage and inflict a condition or two, or that maybe you find yourself using the same Weapons, or maybe you're just really bored and want to play around with the rules of the game a little.

Any reason is fine, you are the GM and you make the calls in your game, just do not forget that if you make rules for an Enemy to have a particular ability (whether it is for Gears or even Characters) it is an entirely valid idea for any of them to want to have access to it – if they are willing to jump through the requisite hoops or to pay the corresponding price, as suggested earlier.





## Inspiration

So, you actually want to make a wholly pregenerated world on your own and then dump the players on top. This is quite hard, but it does have the benefit of making it much easier to pull surprises on the rest of your group and sometimes it even helps make a more immersive experience. Previous lists with sources of inspiration tried to stick to shows legally available in English, but this list will make use of media beyond animated mediums and some of it will not be easy to obtain for the average consumer, much less with an official translation – additionally, not all of it might be suitable for minors. The list on the left is made with general worldbuilding in mind, while the list on the right is meant to inspire general episodic, sandboxy content.

### Aim for the Top! Gunbuster and Diebuster

If there is one thing Gainax has always been constant with, it is their attention to detail... that, and being gigantic nerds. Gunbuster has the better amount of effort placed on the science while still being a super robot show, while Diebuster sports a story that is more complex yet remains whimsical in tone.

### The Macross franchise

It is easy to forget, in between all the saving the world with song, that Macross has a surprising amount of thought going into it. It is possibly one of the grittiest Mecha franchises out there once you look closer, without getting lost in the detail.

### MuvLuv, MuvLuv Alternative, and the rest of the Muv-Luv franchise

There are many things MuvLuv is famous for, but the one we want here is the in-depth worldbuilding and the immersive experience it offers with its alternate-reality semi-realistic giant robots against terrifying aliens.

### Xenogears and Xenosaga (I to III)

Flawed as they may be, both games have rich and detailed worlds. In addition, they are solid examples of how one may mix up Personal and Mecha-scales for action-packed scenes.

### Super Robot Wars

You knew this was coming. Hours, days and weeks can be spent poring over the minutiae of a setting to make it the most realistic, deep and meaningful experience your Players will ever enjoy. Or you can just tell your players: "you are the good guys and have these robots, these are the bad guys and have their own robots," and have some fun. Don't forget this is, in the end, just a game.

### Mobile Police Patlabor

Probably the closest to realism that Mecha shows will ever get, Patlabor makes a good case example on how not every Episode needs to make use of Mecha, and that they might be used for things other than beating up other robots or giant monsters.

### Terrestrial Defense Corp. Dai-Guard

The main characters are everyday salarymen whose job description includes piloting a giant robot and protecting the peace. This should be all you need to know.

### Full Metal Panic

Despite having plenty of novels full of hot Mecha-on-Mecha action, the animated adaptation of Full Metal Panic has a good number of episodes with nothing but character interaction, and a whole interlude Season between important arcs devoted to its slice of life elements.

### Genesis of Aquarion and Aquarion Evol

Aquarion has enough gimmick episodes for multiple Arcs' worth of Intermissions, subverting common cliches going from "The Soccer Episode" to having an entire Episode centered around being poorly animated. It is overflowing in its abundance of ideas, both silly and serious, for all your episodic needs.

### Star Driver: Takuto of the Radiance

It has Mecha, and nearly every Episode has a fight, but they are downplayed in favor of having the villains do silly things that place the main characters in weird situations. It also sports the main character with possibly the greatest abuse of the Mid-Scene Upgrade Genre Power in recent years.



THE CAESAR REASSEMBLED ITSELF OUT OF ITS SCATTERED COMPONENT ARMOR-LIKE PIECES ONCE AGAIN, REFUSING TO BE DEFEATED. ONCE MORE THE GIANT KNIGHT LUNGES WITH ITS SWORD AT THE BLADE'S GEAR, CUTTING OFF ONE OF THE BLACK GENERAL'S ARMS. IT WILL NOT GO DOWN WITHOUT HAVING TAKEN BLADE WITH IT TO THE DEPTHS OF HELL.

EVERYONE WAS BATTERED, BUT THEY KNEW THEY HAD ONE ADVANTAGE OVER THEIR SINGLEMINDED FOE, AND BLADE WAS GOING TO CAPITALIZE ON IT "BOTH OF YOU CONTINUE INTO THE CENTER OF THE SHIP, I'LL KEEP IT DISTRACTED."

"WHAT?" IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR JEFF AND MARIA TO PROTEST "BUT YOU -CAN'T- STAND UP TO IT ON YOUR OWN, MUCH LESS NOW THAT YOU'VE LOST AN ARM."

BLADE SNICKERED "IT CAN'T BE HELPED, I WOULDN'T MAKE IT BACK WITH BLACK GENERAL IN THIS STATE ANYWAY... LISTEN, IT SENSES I AM THE STRONGEST WARRIOR HERE, IF I MAKE AN OPENING, IT'LL LET YOU THROUGH. IT MIGHT BE AN ALIEN, BUT IT IS STILL A PROUD WARRIOR, AND I CAN UNDERSTAND IT AS SUCH."

JEFF KEPT RADIO SILENCE, BUT MARIA SEEMED MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN KEEPING HER SUBORDINATE FROM KILLING HIMSELF "DON'T BE STUPID, WE SAID WE'D ALL GO BACK TOGETHER, AND NO ONE IN MY SQUAD IS A LIAR. EJECT AND I'LL RETRIEVE YOU, WE CAN STILL BEAT THIS GUY."

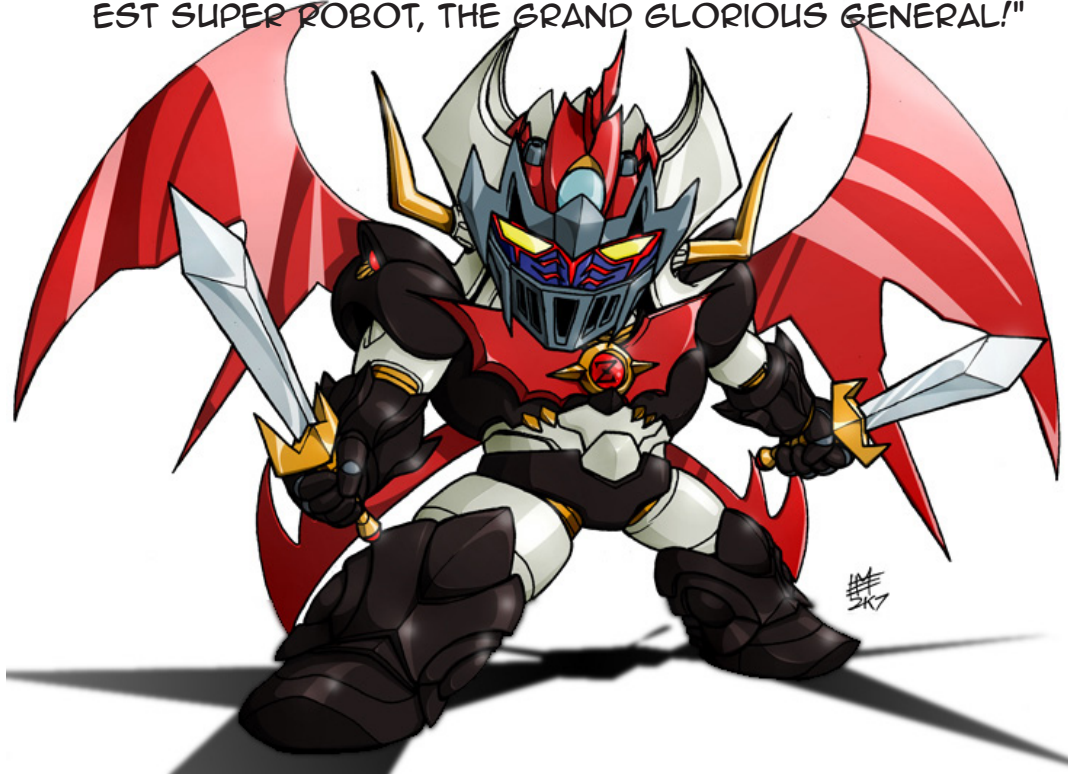
THE OUTSIDER ADOPTED A CHARGING STANCE "HEH. THAT'S A GOOD JOKE. JEFF, YOU UNDERSTAND DON'T YOU?" BLADE DID NOT MOVE THE BLACK GENERAL, NOT EVEN WHEN THE CHAIN SWORD WENT STRAIGHT FOR THE CORE.

THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION.

GENERAL Z WAS IN BETWEEN THE BOTH OF THEM, ITS CHEST STILL RED FROM HAVING JUST USED ITS INCINERATOR TO HALT THE INCOMING ENEMY "ARE YOU DONE PLAYING THE COOL HERO YET?"

BLADE WAS NOT AMUSED "I'M NOT KIDDING AROUND-" BUT JEFF REMAINED CONFIDENT "WE STILL HAVE AN ACE IN THE HOLE, PROFESSOR TENDO'S TRUMP CARD AND THE FINAL RESULT OF ALL THE YEARS OF WORK PUT INTO PROJECT GENERAL, PROJECTILE G AND... FORMATION GGG!"

INDEED, THE OFF-VOICE OF OUR FRIENDLY NARRATOR ELABORATES "THE PROJECTILE G CAN AMPLIFY AND CHANNEL MARIA'S PSYCHIC ENERGY INTO TELEKINETIC FORCE THAT HELPS THE COMBINATION PROGRAM REORDER AND REASSEMBLE THE COMPONENT PIECES OF EACH GEAR INDIVIDUALLY, CREATING THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST SUPER ROBOT, THE GRAND GLORIOUS GENERAL!"



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